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Frontispiece

ONE OF THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK

(From a Bas-Relief by Boris Schatz)

THE JEWISH RELIGION

A Guide to the Principles and Practices of Judaism for Parents, Teachers and Laymen

BY

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Inscribed to the Memory of

My Wife

Carrie Amram Greenstone

PREFACE

The present volume aims to serve as a guide-book of Jewish belief and practice to the teacher, the parent and the average reader. It lays no claim to scientific exactness, nor does it presume to give a philosophic presentation of Jewish ceremonial and belief. It is intended primarily to be of popular use, presenting the most important principles and practices of the Jewish religion in a form that will be attractive to the student and to the layman alike. I have had in mind especially the teacher who seeks guidance and direction in his work of teaching religion. It was, however, shown that the book, in its first edition, was extensively used by parents and lay readers, and also in confirmation classes, as well as by teachers. In preparing this second edition, therefore, while many of the directions to the teacher have been preserved, an effort has been made to widen its scope and to make its popular appeal even stronger than before. The text has been thoroughly revised and, in places, considerably amplified and several pictures, illustrative of the ceremonies of Judaism, have been inserted. These changes and improvements, it is hoped, will add considerably to the usefulness and to the attractiveness of the volume. An appendix, dealing with the ceremonies surrounding birth, marriage and death, has also been added.

With regard to the religious point of view followed in these pages, I need only repeat what was said in the preface to the first edition. "Without consciously suppressing my own conservative point of view, I still hope that I have succeeded in my attempt to deal fairly and sympathetically with the many other points

of view regarding Jewish faith and practice. All polemics have been studiously avoided. I aimed especially to give the attitude of the great body of Israel towards the various principles of belief and the many ceremonies of Judaism, and the reason for such an attitude." This motive also guided me while preparing the book for the second edition. It is my hope that the reader, to whatever school of thought he may belong, will be influenced by this book to assume a broad, sympathetic view of Judaism in its various aspects and forms.

I wish to repeat here my deep appreciation of the many courtesies and kindnesses extended to me by the Chancellor of the Jewish Chautauqua Society, Dr. Henry Berkowitz, and by the Dean of its Correspondence School, Dr. William Rosenau. I am indebted to them for many valuable suggestions both in diction and in arrangement of material while the book was being prepared for the press. I am also grateful to Rabbi Louis Feinberg of Cincinnati for many corrections and suggestions, of which I gladly availed myself in preparing the present, revised edition. Acknowledgments are also due to the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, to the Zion Centre of Harlem, New York, and the Zionist Organization, New York, for much appreciated help in obtaining the illustrations.

JULIUS H. GREENSTONE.

Gratz College, Philadelphia,
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INTRODUCTION

A Word to Teachers and Parents

Object of the Course.—The primary purpose of the Religious School is to develop the religious sentiment in the hearts of the young and to make religion a vital influence in their lives. All instruction, whatever other aims it may have, must tend toward this end—to strengthen the belief in God and to emphasize the feeling of responsibility toward Him.

While the religious teaching in all denominations has the same general end in view, the form as well as the content of its presentation will vary with the peculiar attitude of each denomination toward religion and life, influenced by differences in the primary elements of religion as well as by historic events. The Jewish teacher, with the specific Jewish point in view, will proceed along entirely different lines to reach his goal from those followed by teachers of other creeds. The Jewish conception of the nature of God and His relation to the world, of the destiny of human life and its relation to the divine is distinct and quite different from that held by other religious denominations. It is to elucidate this conception and to assist the teacher in his endeavor to impress the growing generation with the peculiar Jewish outlook on life in its relation to God that these lessons will aim.

Dogmas in Judaism.—Every religious system has developed certain fundamental principles regarding God, His attributes and His relation to man, which are known as dogmas, and a certain order of ceremonies which serve as aids toward the fuller realization of these dogmas or doctrines. Judaism also

has its dogmas and observances, but the position of dogma in Judaism is quite different from that which it occupies in other religions. The number of the Jewish articles of faith has never been definitely settled, nor has even their exact significance been firmly established. Attempts have been made time and again to formulate a Jewish creed, and some of these received general recognition, but none enjoyed authoritative sanction. (See Schechter, Studies in Judaism, ch. VI; Abrahams, Judaism, chaps. III and IV, for a detailed discussion of this subject.) Judaism lays greater stress on conduct than on faith, on character than on dogma, on life than on belief. "Ye shall be holy; for I the Lord your God am Holy!" (Leviticus 19:2) is the keynote of the Jewish religion. Religion, with the Jew, is co-extensive with life, life consecrated by the divine. There is nothing secular in Jewish life, every detail of life is made sacred. What others call good, the Jew characterizes as holy, while the evil he regards as sin. To live the Jewish life, to develop the spiritual elements of character, to hallow the every-day experiences of life, is the essence of the Jewish religion. Dogmas and creeds are necessary, ceremonies and observances are essential in the preservation of a religious system, but the consecration of life is most important, for it is the goal toward which everything else should tend. The Jewish teacher of religion will therefore aim to make the child realize the sanctity of life, to make religion a controlling element in his every-day occupation, in accordance with Jewish teachings.

Arrangement of Material.—Since religious dogmas are in the main abstract and sometimes abstruse, it is generally agreed that the actual teach-

ing of religion should commence rather with the concrete ceremonies and observances. Besides, the practice of placing before the child the concrete and the specific first has the support of sound pedagogic law. The main truths of Judaism are being inculcated in the school from the very first day the child enters it. Through story and fable, through history and prayer, and, above all, through the imperceptible atmosphere created by the reverent, God-fearing and pious teacher, these truths are constantly brought home to the child and are made part of his very nature. The presentation of religious truths in a formal manner should not be begun until the child has reached the higher grades and is able to understand, to analyze ideas and compare them. It is different with the practices of Judaism. They are concrete and specific. They are also more familiar through actual observation and participation. They should therefore be presented first in the religious school.

With these practical considerations in mind, the lessons in this course have been arranged. The ceremonies and practices of Judaism are discussed first and the principles and beliefs are given later.

Value of Ceremonies.—Our thoughts and emotions constantly seek expression in word or action. We do not rest satisfied with an idea that we conceive or a feeling that we experience until we have formulated the idea or feeling in sentence or deed, until we have given it some concrete form. Our love for parent or friend constantly clamors for some tangible manifestation in the form of gift or service. We seek the occasion to show our love by deeds of kindness, by tokens of affection. The intensity of the feeling is frequently measured by

the self-sacrifice undergone in giving material expression to it. Thus, birthdays, anniversaries and other family celebrations are made occasions for permitting these feelings to become interpreted in words or actions, and no loving soul will let such an opportunity pass unnoticed.

This is the psychological origin of the idea of worship. We are not satisfied with the feeling of a belief in God, we wish to give expression to our feeling of adoration of Him. Special hours of the day, special days in the year are set aside, when opportunity is afforded us to manifest our religious sentiments by means of words or actions, when we are especially moved to worship. The nature of the worship has differed with the various stages of civilization. At one time men believed that God would be pleased if they offered up a human being or an animal to Him; now we feel that He is content with an expression in words of the feelings that may move a contrite heart or a grateful spirit. The underlying principle is the same, deeply rooted in the heart of every human being. Made up, as man is, of body and spirit, the spirit will always seek the help of the body, so that it may interpret itself in a concrete and tangible form. This is true of the whole range of human emotions and is recognized in all social relations. The family, the state, and society generally developed peculiar ceremonies in which the social sentiment finds expression.

Place of Ceremonies in Judaism.—As the "holy people," the people with whom religion meant the consecration of life, the Jews have developed an elaborate system of ceremonies for every occasion in life, from the cradle to the grave. Primarily serving as a means of expressing religious senti-

ments, these ceremonies also served many good purposes in the preservation of Judaism and the Jews. They taught the Jews the great lessons of self-sacrifice and self-abnegation; they helped to keep their mission as the religious people par excellence ever vivid before them; they helped them to keep up their loyalty and courage in times of greatest temptation and suffering. It was through these ceremonies that the individuality of the Jewish people constantly received new emphasis and it was especially due to their influence that the Jews, always a small minority, were not swallowed up by the great majority among whom they lived. Through the observance of these ceremonies the Jew was always reminded of his peculiar nature and destiny, the great ideals of his religion were constantly recalled, the great purposes of his existence constantly emphasized, so that martyrdom became glorious, suffering and persecution easily endured. By the constant observance of these ceremonies, the fibre of the Jew became hardened, his powers of endurance increased, and his love for his religion and his God became all pervading.

Thus, alongside of their primary purposes to serve as indices to some abstract truths and ideals, Jewish ceremonies have, through long usage, become sacred and valuable in themselves. The Jewish people have learned to look upon these ceremonies as family heirlooms and clung to them with filial piety and affection. If their primary purposes were forgotten or no more obtained, they endeavored to give them new meaning and new life. Even such customs as were admittedly borrowed from other peoples have, after long usage and after they have become fully assimilated with Jewish life and received the Jewish stamp, remained sacred and

inviolable. This was no mere blind following "the customs of the fathers," but rather the deep affection felt for everything that was practiced by Jews and thereby became associated with Jewish life. The consciousness of the Jewish people was always regarded as the best judge in deciding the value of ceremonies. Those that were not readily assimilated to that consciousness were dropped in the course of time and no artificial means to retain them availed aught; others were modified and adjusted; and others again were retained in their original form—all because the Jewish people so willed it. Numerous examples of each kind will be cited in the course of these lessons. We need mention here only the institution of the Sabbatical year and its modification, amounting to an abrogation, made by Hillel (Prosbul), and the development of the elaborate sacrificial system into our present mode of worship. "Catholic Israel" may be relied upon to select and retain that which is of the greatest assistance to the preservation of its existence and to the accomplishment of its life-work.

Teacher's Point of View.—It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that the teacher who is to present these ceremonies to his class should be possessed of the proper appreciation and reverence for them. He must regard as sacred that which the consciousness of the Jewish people considers sacred. Facts or conditions that obtain in a certain community, or even in a certain country, must not be allowed to exert an influence on the proper appreciation of a ceremony that is still adhered to by the great mass of the people. The teacher must be especially on his guard against the influence of provincialism in religion. His duty is not to train

American, English or German Jews, but Jews, without any epithet, members of the great cosmopolitan body of Israel. Exigencies of time and place are ephemeral and transitory. They may be referred to; they may be recognized and explained, e.g., the present state of the observance of the Sabbath; but must not be permitted to influence the point of view of teacher or pupil regarding matters that are vital to the Jews of the world.

Object Lessons.—It is urged that the teacher provide himself with a collection of objects which will help in illustrating the lesson under consideration. The teacher must, however, be careful not to create the impression that his collection is a miniature museum of archæological remains which are merely of historic interest. A Mezuzah is still the distinctive mark of hundreds of thousands of Jewish homes and should be presented as of present importance in the practice of Judaism. Tefillin are still worn by millions of Jews, and should be explained not as a relic of bygone days, but as a living factor in the lives of the Jews of today, no matter what the personal view of the teacher on the value of these ceremonies is. The same is true regarding the more important institutions of Judaism, about which differences of opinion may exist. Not the teacher, nor even the congregation or community, but the great people of Israel, is the final judge as to the importance of a ceremony, and it is this view that the teacher must present to his pupils, whom he wishes to train to become members of this great body.

Division of the Subject.—The Jewish Calendar, including the Sabbath and the Festivals, and their

observance in synagogue and home, will naturally occupy the greater portion of these lessons. The synagogue, its origin and composition; prayer, both public and private; the home, with its numerous observances and customs, will receive adequate treatment in special lessons. Finally the beliefs and doctrines of our religion will be presented and discussed as they should be given in the higher grades in a formal and connected course.

Plan of Lesson.—In presenting a lesson on any of the ceremonies of Judaism, attention will be directed to the following points, whenever possible:

1. The significance of the ceremony.
2. Explanation of the ceremony with reference to its origin.
3. Details of its observance according to Bible and Talmud.
4. Description of its observance in Jewish History.
5. Effect of the ceremony on Jewish life.
6. Illustrations.

It is advised that the teacher, in preparing a lesson for the class-room, also keep these points in mind.

Bibliography.—It will be necessary for the student to consult and, if possible, own the following books, to which reference will be made in the course of these lessons:

The Bible.

The Prayer Book.

Authorized Daily Prayer Book of the United Hebrew Congregation of the British Empire, translated by Rev. S. Singer.

Service of the Synagogue (Festival), edited by M. Davis and N. Adler; 6 volumes.

(Note: Teachers in Congregational Schools will do well to compare these with the prayer book used in the particular congregation. Reference will be made to the Union Prayer Book for Jewish Worship and to Prayers for Private Devotion, both edited and published by the Central Conference of American Rabbis and used in many synagogues in this country.)

Joseph, M., Judaism as Creed and Life.

Course Book on Jewish Religion, issued by the Jewish Chautauqua Society and based on the above book.

Friedlander, M., The Jewish Religion.

Kohler, K., Guide for Instruction in Judaism.

Joseph, N. S., Religion, Natural and Revealed.

Mendes, H. P., Jewish Religion Ethically Presented.

Greenstone, J. H., The Religion of Israel.

Rosenau, W., Jewish Ceremonial Institutions and Customs.

Dembitz, L. H., Jewish Services in Synagogue and Home.

Berkowitz, H., Kiddush or Sabbath Sentiment.

Abrahams, I., Judaism.

Abrahams, I., Festival Studies, being Thoughts on the Jewish Year.

The Passover Hagadah, various editions.

Free use should be made of the Jewish Encyclopedia, a copy of which should be in every Religious School Library.

RÉSUMÉ

To develop the belief in God and the feeling of responsibility toward Him is the purpose of all religious training. It is the peculiar Jewish attitude

toward religion and life that should receive emphasis in the Jewish School.

Consecration of life is the keynote of Judaism. As a religious system, however, Judaism developed some fundamental principles of faith and conduct —dogmas and ceremonies—which are essential in the preservation of the religion.

Ceremonies are primarily symbols of ideas and emotions. They are the outcome of the natural desire of man to give concrete expression to his feelings and thoughts. Compare the numerous ceremonies in social and family life. By constant usage, Jewish ceremonies have acquired inherent value, because of their becoming intimately associated with Jewish life and characteristic of it. The "Keneseth Israel," the whole Jewish community, decides for itself as to the comparative value of certain ceremonies and observances.

The teacher must therefore guard against provincialism and narrowness in deciding the value of certain ceremonies. He must regard the feelings and practices of the great majority of Jews and not merely of his immediate surroundings. He must cultivate the proper reverence and appreciation for the ceremonies of Judaism that are still followed by the great bulk of the Jewish people.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the purpose of the Jewish religious school?

2. What is the position of dogma in Judaism?

3. What do you understand by "consecration of life"?

4. Give some illustrations of modern life, showing the importance attached to ceremonies.

5. What was the effect of the observance of ceremonies on the character of the Jews?

6. How is the value of a ceremony determined? Give an example.

7. Explain the term "Catholic Israel."

8. What should the attitude of the teacher be toward ceremonies which he no more observes, but which are still adhered to by the majority of Jews?

9. How should ceremonial objects be regarded in the school?

10. Give a brief summary of your own attitude toward ceremonies.

I. THE SABBATH

Object.—The institution of the Sabbath, the most important in the range of Jewish ceremonies, has as its primary object the sanctification of life. By calling one day in the week holy, man's real destiny is recalled and emphasized. Indeed, the idea of physical rest and abstention from ordinary labor is aimed at by the law-giver, as the term Sabbath (cessation) indicates, but this also is only a means to the final end. Note that the commandment, both in Exodus (20:8-11) and Deuteronomy (5:12-15) begins with the positive order to keep the day holy, which is followed by the prohibition against all manner of labor. This higher purpose of the Sabbath day should be kept in mind in presenting the lesson, as it will form the best criterion for what should be done and what should be avoided on this day.

The reason for the institution of the Sabbath day is variously given in the two versions of the Ten Commandments, in Exodus and Deuteronomy. God created the world in six days and rested on the seventh, hence we also should rest on the seventh day, in commemoration of this event. This is the reason given in Exodus (20:11, also 32:17; compare Genesis 2:1-3), for the observance of the Sabbath day. In the Deuteronomic version of the Ten Commandments, a historical reason is assigned: "And thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and the Lord thy God brought thee out thence by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord thy God

commanded thee to keep the sabbath day." This double significance of the Sabbath—the religious and the historical—is emphasized in the Kiddush recited on Friday night. It is to be "a memorial of the creation" and "a remembrance of the departure from Egypt." God, the Creator of heaven and earth, and God, the Redeemer of Israel,—these are the two great ideas suggested by the observance of the Sabbath day.

The Sabbath—A Day of Rest.—"Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is a sabbath unto the Lord thy God, in it thou shalt not do any manner of work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates." (Exodus 20:9-10.) Labor is the duty and the privilege of man. Idleness is both a sin and a misfortune. It is our mission to add to the knowledge, the comfort and the wealth of the world by the work of our hands or of our brains. By means of honest, conscientious work, in whatever domain, we enrich our own lives and add to the beauty and perfection of the world. (Read to the class Psalms 128:2; Proverbs 6:6-11.)

The preservation of physical health, however, is as much a religious duty as labor is. After six days of work, the body needs rest and recreation. The Sabbath day is thus intended to secure for our bodies that rest which they demand after a week of toil. Note the humanity of the law. Even the slave and the beast should be allowed to rest on this day. (Compare Deuteronomy 5:14.) Such touches of mercy and kindness to dependents and to the brute creation fill the pages of our Bible.

Only a few specific instances of the kinds of labor

from which we should abstain on the Sabbath day are given in the Bible. (Exodus 16:29; 35:3; Jeremiah 17:21; Nehemiah 10:32; 13:15.) Our Rabbis, however, have classified all kinds of work under thirty-nine heads, which include all possible cases of forbidden labor. Any manner of work that requires special exertion or that may mar the spiritual character of the day must be avoided.

In emphasizing the prohibition against labor, the teacher will be confronted with the difficulty of harmonizing his teachings with the actual practice in some of the homes from which his pupils come. It would be a grave mistake on the part of the teacher to attempt to condone the Sabbath-breaking on the part of parents (see Leviticus 19:3). Conditions may be explained to older children, making them understand at the same time that while business competition may compel some to violate the Sabbath, it does not excuse it. The consciousness of the Sabbath-breaker should be aroused and quickened, rather than pacified and thus remove the feeling of guilt. A person who is conscious of the fact that he is committing a sin, even though the sin is committed under duress, will endeavor to obviate as much as lies in his power the circumstances that force him into such conduct and also to minimize the sin itself as much as possible. Not so with the one who is hardened in his sin and comes to think of it as justifiable and excusable. The street-cleaner who comes home from his work on Sabbath afternoon, puts on his Sabbath garments, reads his prayers and spends the rest of the day in religious devotion or dignified recreation is worthy of emulation. He is sorry for the sin he is committing and is eagerly awaiting the opportunity to observe the Sabbath in its en-

tirety. There is a vast difference between explaining the conditions that cause the sin and justifying the sin committed, and the teacher must be careful to distinguish between the two. In presenting the lesson, he must explain the modern tendency of Sabbath-breaking as a misfortune which must be temporarily endured but which may be overcome in time, so that every effort should be directed toward the end of overcoming this misfortune. The feeling of respect for parents will not be diminished by making them appear as sinners, since their sinful actions will be explained and attributed to the proper cause, while the teacher will have done his duty to his calling by making the action appear sinful. The Sabbath spirit has been introduced in many a home through the children who have been instructed by conscientious teachers, and many a parent came to see Sabbath desecration in its true light through the medium of proper school instruction and guidance in these matters given to his children. Such a duty and such a holy privilege should certainly not be neglected by any teacher engaged in planting Jewishness in the hearts of his young pupils.

The Sabbath—A Day of Joy.—"And call the Sabbath a delight." (Isaiah 58:13.) The Sabbath should be a day of joy and cheer, of dignified pleasure and recreation. Because of the numerous laws and regulations that surround the observance of the day, the notion has arisen in some circles that the Jewish Sabbath was a day of austere solemnity, a day of solemn thoughts and sad contemplation. This is very far from the truth. The observant Jew always looked forward to the Sabbath with most pleasurable anticipations; he welcomed it

with cheer and exultation; he called it in his literature by the most endearing terms and spent it in joy and gladness. (Read Schechter, Studies in Judaism, pp. 244-248.)

In agreement with this attitude toward the Sabbath, the Jew endeavors to prepare the best food that he can afford and to clothe himself in the finest garments that he possesses. Fasting or mourning is strictly forbidden, and, in the service for the day, any prayer that may arouse sadness or grief is studiously avoided. When visiting the sick or the mourners, one should say that this is not a day of weeping or sadness, and that consolation and help will surely come to them.

Emphasize this point to your class. Dilate on the joy and happiness that fill the Jewish household on the Sabbath; describe the evening meal with its tasty viands and accompanying cheerful songs (Zemirot); the family reunion at the table; the peace and happiness that reign supreme in the Jewish household at that time. Read to the class from Berkowitz, "Sabbath Sentiment in the Home," pp. 25, 61, and other songs which show the love and affection the Jews always felt for their Sabbath. See also ib. pages 37-40, 52.

As to the nature of the pleasures in which we might indulge on this day, there is only one standard:—the sanctification of life. Those pleasures only may we enjoy which lead to the better appreciation of the holiness of the day, or, at least, do not detract therefrom. Boisterous amusements, games that cause exertion and fatigue, sports that excite the nerves and satisfy only the animal part within us, are not the proper pleasures for the Sabbath day. Other amusements, which, though not fatiguing, are not dignified and do not lead to higher

thoughts and a better appreciation of the sanctity of the day, should be avoided. The primary object of the day should be kept in mind in deciding as to what manner of pleasure to indulge in, and every individual will be able to decide for himself what to do and what to avoid.

The Sabbath—A Day of Worship.—"Half for yourself and half for God" is the principle laid down by the Rabbis regarding the proper observance of Sabbaths and holidays. While pleasure and recreation should form part of the day's program, worship and instruction should be given a prominent place in the duties of the day. The home service of the day centers about the greeting and taking leave of the Sabbath. The day is welcomed in the home first by lighting the Sabbath candles by the housewife and pronouncing the blessing over them, and then by the recital of Kiddush by the head of the household. (See Rosenau, Jewish Ceremonial Institutions and Customs, pp. 115-120.) Blessing the children by their parents is a beautiful custom observed at the beginning of the Sabbath. The sanctity of the home, the exalted position of the wife in the Jewish household, the beauty of a pure family life are thus emphasized at the very entrance of the blessed day.

The Kiddush consists of an introductory section, a quotation from Genesis 2: 1-3, followed by two blessings, one over the wine and another that refers to the sanctity of the day. Wine is a symbol of joy and cheer (Psalms 104: 15). The cup of wine is passed around and all the members of the family partake of it. A similar ceremony is also observed in connection with the Sabbath morning meal.

At the conclusion of the Sabbath, the Habdalah prayer is recited, also over a cup of wine. Loath to part with the blessed day, Jews wait with the recital of the Habdalah prayer until stars appear in the sky, long after sunset. Habdalah means "distinction," and it is to emphasize the distinction between the Sabbath and the week days. The prayer consists of a blessing over the wine, a blessing over the spices and a blessing over the light. By pronouncing a blessing over the light the first thing in the creation of the world is recalled. The custom of having spices at the Habdalah has been variously explained. Whatever the origin of the custom is, it serves now to remind us of the cheerfulness and joy of the Sabbath day; the pleasant odor of the spices symbolizing the departure of the "additional soul," which, the Rabbis said, every one gets on the Sabbath, and which leaves its fragrance with us during the whole week. (See Rosenau, ib. pp. 71-75.)

In the synagogue, special services are held on the Sabbath, special hymns and psalms are sung and recited, all of which tend to impress upon us the holiness of the day. A prominent feature of the morning service is the reading of a section from the Pentateuch and one from the Prophets (Parashah and Haftarah). In most synagogues the selections from the Pentateuch are so arranged that all the five books are completed in the course of one year. In others, the Pentateuch is completed once in three years. It is usual to honor some of the worshippers by calling them up to the reading desk while the Torah is being read. Each one thus honored pronounces the blessing before and after the reading of the section to which he is called. This is regarded as an honor conferred upon the

individual who is so "called up." The section from the Prophets (Haftarah) usually contains some reference to the portion from the Pentateuch read on the same day. A boy, on reaching the age of thirteen (Bar Mizwah), is often honored by being permitted to read the section from the Torah and the Haftarah, thus indicating that he has become a member of the congregation.

The emphasis that Judaism lays on instruction is thus brought out most prominently in the Sabbath service. Not only should the heart be uplifted in worship, but the mind also should be refreshed by study and investigation of the divine word. The reading from the Torah gave an impetus for further study and interpretation, which was the origin of the more modern sermon. At first, this was given in the afternoon by some learned person and dealt mainly with the exposition of the text. The more modern custom is to have the sermon delivered during the service in the morning, soon after the Torah is placed back in the ark. In the long summer afternoons it is customary to read the chapters from the "Ethics of the Fathers," which contain most beautiful maxims of life and conduct. In the old synagogue, Sabbath afternoon was indeed a busy time. Various circles and groups would join in the study of one or another branch of Jewish lore, while others still would listen to an address by a preacher. The intellectual pleasure derived from study and research was that most sought after and most enjoyed by Jews of all times.

Objects for Illustration.—In presenting the lesson on the Sabbath, it is well that the teacher provide himself with some or all of the following objects,

which will serve to illustrate the various portions of the lesson. When showing them to the class it should be mentioned that these objects are now in actual use by Jews all over the world.

The Sabbath Lamp.—This may be either one of antique type, with the seven branches, or, if this is not obtainable, a modern candelabra may be substituted.

The Kiddush Cup, either of silver or plated. *The Spice Box. The Habdalah Candle.*

When speaking of the reading from the Torah, a miniature scroll of the Law may be shown. It should be explained that the Torah is written by a pious scribe on parchment, and not printed.

There are some very beautiful pictures depicting various ceremonies connected with the Sabbath. The teacher should get some of these and pass them around the class. (See Rosenau, op. cit., pictures facing pp. 32, 37, 71, 115, 124.)

RÉSUMÉ

The ideal of the Sabbath day is not merely abstention from labor, but rest sanctified by spiritual endeavor. The sacredness of human life receives fresh emphasis when we give one out of every seven days to God.

The historic consciousness, as well as the purely religious emotions, are stirred by the observance of the Sabbath. It is a "Sign" between God and Israel, a "perpetual covenant." (Exodus 31:13, 16, 17.) The loyalty of the Jews to their religion can frequently be measured by the sacrifices they are willing to make for the sake of the Sabbath.

While all work is strictly forbidden on the Sab-

Habdalah Set

bath, when a human life is in danger it is not only permitted to do all kinds of labor, but it is even enjoined and regarded a "Mizwah," a duty, to break the Sabbath. The most learned and most pious Jew will not hesitate to kindle a fire on the Sabbath, when it is necessary for the sake of a sick person. The Sabbath is not to be a yoke but a source of pleasure.

We must, however, discriminate between low or frivolous pastimes and exalted pleasures. The primary purpose of the day, as a holy day, if kept constantly in mind, will be the best test as to the kind of pleasures to pursue on the Sabbath day.

Do not attempt to excuse or justify Sabbath desecration. There are many practices that you, as a religious teacher, will be unable to excuse. Better arouse and foster the consciousness that the breaking of the Sabbath is a sin, and to be forced to break it should be regarded as a terrible misfortune, to avoid which noble men and women have brought and still bring great sacrifices. Mention the things that one can observe, even though one be forced to attend to business. Since the violation of the Sabbath is a misfortune, all effort will naturally be directed toward minimizing the misfortune as much as possible.

Public worship on the Sabbath day helps to unite the whole House of Israel, even as the Friday night meal in the Jewish home helps to unite the individual family. By attending public service regularly one gives concrete expression to his religious emotions, and at the same time evinces his loyalty to the Jewish people, and thus strengthens the bond of union that unites all Israel. Illustrate by mentioning the example of a Jew who comes to a distant land, where everything appears to him strange, but

when he comes to the synagogue he feels himself at home, among his own brethren.

The synagogue was also the first school-house in Jewish history. To study and to learn was not less a religious command than to worship and to pray. It is through greater knowledge that we can better worship our God. The synagogue, therefore, provided for both "Torah" and "Abodah," study and worship. It, indeed, so combined the two that some of the prayers in our liturgy are nothing else but lessons for study, while the study of the Law was regarded as a part of religious service.

Equal prominence was given on the Sabbath day to the third principle of Simeon the Just,—Acts of Kindness. (See Ethics of the Fathers, 1:2.) The stranger, the poor and the needy were provided with homes and food on the Sabbath. There was hardly a Jewish home where there was not a "guest" (Orah) at the table at the Friday evening meal. The hospitality of the Jew was most general and kindly on Sabbaths and holidays. Any one who had a home, however humble, was ready to share it with a less fortunate brother who had none.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the final aim of the Sabbath?

2. Mention the two reasons given for the observance of the Sabbath, and indicate the respective value of each.

3. What is the Jewish attitude toward labor? Quote some passages from the Bible or Rabbinic literature in which this attitude is expressed.

4. How should the teacher treat the subject of Sabbath desecration in modern times?

5. What should be the test for the kind of recreation on the Sabbath? Give examples of the proper and improper kind of pleasures.

6. Prove from Jewish law and practice that the Sabbath was a day of joy rather than a day of sadness and gloom.

7. Explain and describe the ceremonies of Kiddush and Habdalah.

8. "Study, Worship and Acts of Kindness" are the pillars upon which human society is founded, according to Simeon the Just. Explain how these are prominent in the observance of the Sabbath day.

9. How would you explain the idea of the "added soul" which, our Rabbis say, is given to every Israelite on the Sabbath?

10. Mention some good purposes served by public worship.

II. THE JEWISH CALENDAR—THE FESTIVALS

Importance of the Knowledge of the Subject.—While the system and arrangement of the Jewish calendar will probably not form a subject of instruction in the class-room, it is of the greatest importance that the teacher should be familiar with the laws and general principles underlying the calculation of the Jewish calendar, which is founded on principles entirely different from those forming the basis of the secular calendar, to which we are accustomed. Many points in the exposition of the festivals will become clear and assume new meaning after the general principles of the calendar have been grasped and learned. It will, of course, not be possible here to give a detailed and scientific discussion of the subject, but the general laws that are indispensable to an understanding of the calendar, with a few examples illustrating their application, will suffice for our purpose. For a more elaborate discussion of the subject the student is referred to the article "Calendar" in the Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. III; Friedlander, "The Jewish Religion," pp. 360-368; Joseph, "Judaism as Creed and Life," pp. 234-240.

Days, Weeks and Months.—The day in the Jewish calendar begins with sunset and ends with sunset (comp. Genesis 1:5, etc.). The days of the week have no special names, but are known simply as first day, second day, etc. The seventh day only

has a special name, the Sabbath, and the sixth day was designated in Rabbinic writings as "Erev Sabbath," the "eve of the Sabbath," while the evening following the Sabbath was called "Mozae Sabbath," the "departure of the Sabbath." The same names are also applied to the day preceding a festival and the evening following it (Erev Yom Tob and Mozae Yom Tob). The day following the festival is known as "Isru Hag," with reference to Psalms 118:27.

The months also were known as the first, second, etc., in Biblical times. There are, however, references in the Bible to names of months, denoting agricultural conditions. Of these only the following four names are preserved—"Abib" (ear of corn, Exodus 13:4), corresponding to the first month; "Ethanim" (hardy fruit, I Kings 8:2), corresponding to the seventh month; "Bul" (rain, I Kings 6:38), corresponding to the eighth month; "Ziv" (beauty, I Kings 6:1), corresponding to the second month. The following are the names of the Hebrew months, which have been used among the Jews since their return from the Babylonian captivity: Nisan (corresponding approximately to April), Iyar (May), Sivan (June), Tammuz (July), Ab (August), Elul (September), Tishri (October), Heshvan (November), Kislev (December), Tebet (January), Shebat (February), Adar (March). In the leap year another month is added, known as Adar Sheni, i. e., Second Adar.

Arrangement of the Calendar.—The Jewish calendar is chiefly lunar in character, so that the month is made to correspond to the period it takes the moon to revolve around the earth, approximately 29½ days. In order to adjust the lunar year (of

354 days) to the solar year (of 365 days), it became necessary to insert an additional month every three years, or, more correctly, seven months in the course of nineteen years. We thus have seven leap years in every cycle (Machzor) of nineteen years, i. e., the third, sixth, eighth, eleventh, fourteenth, seventeenth and nineteenth.

The Jewish month should, strictly speaking, consist of 29½ days. Because of the inconvenience involved in dividing a day between two months, the calendar is so arranged that each month has alternately 29 and 30 days. In order that the Day of Atonement should not come on a Friday or a Sunday, because of the hardship it would involve to observe two consecutive Sabbaths, and also that Hoshana Rabba should not come on a Saturday, the calendar is so arranged that the first day of Tishri never comes on a Sunday, Wednesday or Friday. This arrangement made it necessary to change occasionally the strictly scientific formula of the calendar. The change is made in the months of Heshvan and Kislev. The number of days in these two months therefore varies, so that sometimes they both have 30 days each, sometimes 29 days each, and at other times they have 29 and 30 days respectively.

The first day of the month (Rosh Hodesh) was in olden times celebrated as a solemn convocation. Special sacrifices were offered and all work was suspended. It was regarded as a period of atonement and aroused thoughts of repentance of sin and of the return to a new life. The character of the New Moon has lost much of its ancient significance, although the special services for the day still retain and emphasize the idea of repentance. On the Sabbath preceding the New Moon, a special prayer is

offered and the day of the New Moon is announced. It is in consonance with the idea that every new period in life should bring up earnest thoughts, serious reflections on our past deeds and resolutions for a better life in the future. It was not, however, at any time regarded as a sad occasion. Prayers of gratitude and joyful thanksgiving (Hallel) were included in the service of the day, and the day was observed as a minor festival.

In those months which have thirty days, the thirtieth day is also kept as Rosh Hodesh of the following month.

Second Days of the Festivals.—Before the calendar, as we now have it, was fully established, the first day of the month (Rosh Hodesh) was declared by the Sanhedrin (the highest court of Judea), through the testimony of witnesses. The beginning of the astronomical month is the moment of the conjunction of sun and moon (Molad), when nothing can be seen of the moon. Six hours later a small portion of the moon can be seen under favorable conditions. Witnesses who watched for this moment and saw the moon were examined by the Sanhedrin on the thirtieth of the month. If their testimony was found to be reliable, the day was declared "Rosh Hodesh" and the preceding month had twenty-nine days. If no reliable witnesses appeared, the day was added to the previous month, making it a month of thirty days, and the following day was kept as "Rosh Hodesh." The decision of the Sanhedrin was immediately proclaimed in Jerusalem, and messengers were dispatched to other communities to announce the day of the New Moon, so that the festivals coming within the month might be celebrated by all on the same day. Jewish com-

munities that lived at a distance from Jerusalem and could not be reached in time by signals or messengers, kept two days of the holiday, so as to be certain of observing the proper day. This custom received the approval of the highest authorities of the time, and in course of time became general throughout the diaspora (Dispersion). The New Year holy day was often observed for two days, even in Jerusalem itself, because of the uncertainty in reference to the first day of the month existing even there. The Day of Atonement was nowhere kept for more than one day, on account of the hardship of fasting for two consecutive days.

Even after the calendar was fixed and the day of the New Moon could be calculated with ease ahead of time, the second-day holiday continued to be observed by the great majority of the Jews living outside of Palestine, so that it became a permanent institution of Judaism. Although knowing that the cause of its origin no more exists, the observant Jew argues that since it has become a "Minhag," a custom hallowed by time and followed by many generations of Jews, it has the force of law and cannot be abrogated by any individual community. On the other hand, those who are less rigid in their religious observances, both in this country and in Western Europe, have given up the observance of the second day. While admitting the force of the conservative argument in favor of it, they believe that this is not sufficient reason for adding hardships to those against which the Jew must contend under the present economic conditions.

Memorable Dates in Jewish Year.—The memorable dates in the Jewish calendar are the three festivals—Passover (Nisan 15), Shabuot (Sivan 6) and

Sukkot (Tishri 15); the two holy days, New Year (Tishri 1), and the Day of Atonement (Tishri 10); the minor festivals, Hanukkah (Kislev 25) and Purim (Adar 14); and the fast days, Tishah b'Ab (Ab 9), Shibah Asar b'Tammuz (Tammuz 17), Asarah b'Tebet (Tebet 10), Taanit Esther (Adar 13), and Zom Gedaliah (Tishri 3). Besides these, there are some other dates of feasts and fasts of smaller significance that will be noted in future lessons.

The Three Festivals.—The three chief festivals of the Jewish Year—Passover, Shabuot and Sukkot—have a double significance. They were primarily observed as agricultural feasts—Passover marking the early harvest, Shabuot the later harvest, and Sukkot the period of ingathering of the fruit. Later they also served to mark the various stages in the events connected with the birth of the Jewish nation—the Exodus from Egypt (Passover), the Revelation at Mt. Sinai (Shabuot), and the Journey Through the Desert (Sukkot). In the Bible as well as in the ceremonies connected with the observance of these days, these two meanings are alternately emphasized, although, in course of time, the historic reason has become more prominent and gradually overshadowed the original agricultural significance of these days.

The Historic Consciousness.—The observance of these festivals has always been regarded as the most valuable means to arouse the historic consciousness of the Jew, and thus strengthen the feelings of loyalty and devotion to the Jewish past and Jewish ideals. Whatever our views are as to the present position of the Jews in the economy of nations,

whatever ideals or hopes we entertain regarding the future of our people, all are agreed in the fact that Israel had a great and glorious past, a history of which we, the scions of the House of Israel, may justly be proud. Whether we regard the Jews of the present as a nation, a race or a religious denomination; whether we believe the mission of the Jews to be to return to Palestine and establish there again their religion and national culture or to remain scattered among the nations of the earth, and thereby help in the establishment of the kingdom of God upon earth, there can be but little difference of opinion as to the fact that the Jews originally were a nation and that they developed their religion along national lines. A peculiar nation, indeed, the Jews always were, a nation that made religion the guiding factor in its existence, and therefore was able to maintain itself even after its national center was destroyed; a nation that strove consciously to realize in its national life the highest ideals of religion and morality, that made the belief in God and loyalty to His law the only criteria of patriotism and national adherence; but a nation, nevertheless, a nation with a history, a nation with a language and with a literature, with national institutions and customs, with national heroes and martyrs. The emotions by which we are stirred when we think of the national greatness of our ancestors, the feelings of pride and exaltation that well up in our breasts on contemplating the noble achievements of prophets and rabbis, kings and princes, the sympathies aroused within us when we hear of the many misfortunes that befell our people, and the pride we take in the many triumphs that they have achieved —this is what we understand by the historic consciousness. It is the feeling that we have a history

to be proud of, that we have a great and glorious past and that this past imposes upon us obligations of loyalty to the religion and ideals of our ancestors.

While strictly religious in their character, as everything in Judaism is, these holidays, serving as memorials of the past, are intended to foster this historic consciousness and to impress upon the young the dignity and grandeur of Israel's history. Their pedagogic value has been recognized even in the Bible, where we find it constantly repeated that the nature and significance of these feasts be made known to the children (Exodus 13: 8-14; Deuteronomy 6:20, et al.). In presenting a lesson on any of these holidays the teacher should seek to arouse the feelings of admiration and reverence for the great deeds of the heroes and leaders of ancient Israel, to whom he and his pupils are connected by ties of nationality and blood relationship.

The Religious Element.—The chief purpose of these festivals, however, is a religious one, as is, indeed, the purpose of all Jewish institutions. While the historic aspect is important and valuable, it is after all only a means to the final end—that of arousing within us feelings of obligation to God and reminding us of duties that might otherwise be forgotten. The setting aside of special days for religious devotion and the contemplation of duty is meant primarily to bring us nearer to an understanding of our destiny as children of a divine Father, who loves righteousness and to whom we owe our very existence. Passover, for example, while, indeed, a national feast, reminding us of the birth of our nation, emphasizes primarily the fact that it was God who took our ancestors out of

Egypt and that it was His mighty hand that wrought all the wonders attendant upon this great event.

This is the distinguishing mark between the Jewish national festivals and the national festivals of other peoples, influencing so strongly the manner of their observance, as, indeed, it is the distinguishing mark between the attitude to life of the Jews and other peoples. In the Biblical records, in the prayer book, in the ceremonies observed on these days, the emphasis is constantly laid on the intervention of God in our national affairs. The pupil must be made to see the hand of God in Jewish history, he must be made to feel that all our national achievements and national greatness is due to the special providence of a kind and merciful Father, the Guardian of Israel.

The Agricultural Significance.—The original agricultural reason for the observance of these festivals must not be entirely overlooked, even at the present time. It may be difficult to present to city-bred children the emotions of the farmer who has scattered his seed and attended to all the requirements of the soil and then waits for the harvest to come. His feelings of dependence upon Providence, while watching for the rain to come in its season and for the sunshine to perfect nature's work, are deep and intense. And when God has blessed his handiwork and the crop has been plenty, how grateful he feels toward God for His bounties and blessings. His faith in a kind Providence sustains him throughout the long period of waiting, and his gratitude later finds expression in prayer and song. It is only when these emotions are brought out clearly and made plain that our children will have a clear idea of the

meaning and full significance of the American Thanksgiving Day, one of the most glorious of our national institutions.

Incidentally, the teacher may use this opportunity to explain the reason why the Jews, who were at first an agricultural people, are now mainly engaged in the trades and professions. He may tell his pupils that during the Middle Ages and in some places even in modern times, the Jews were forbidden to own land and were forced by constant persecutions as well as by the necessity of wandering from place to place to engage in trade or business. Not secure from oppression in any place where they settled, being in constant dread of forced exile from places where they made their homes, the Jews had to keep their property in a form that is easily portable, so as to be ready to move on at the command of prince or priest. The teacher may also, in this connection, elaborate upon the desirability of a return to the soil on the part of the Jews, wherever that is possible, and upon the beauty and security of the farmer's life.

RÉSUMÉ

The main point of distinction between the Jewish and the secular calendar is that while the latter is based upon the calculation of the revolutions of the earth around the sun, the former follows the reckoning of the revolutions of the moon around the earth. The necessity of adjusting the lunar to the solar calendar, so that the festivals should come in the proper seasons of the year, was realized very early in Jewish history, hence the intercalation of an additional month in leap years. The scientific character of the calendar is thus maintained, and

the festivals still fall in their proper agricultural seasons.

The arrangement of the calendar and the preservation of its integrity were always regarded of the greatest importance. Only the Highest Court in Jerusalem was privileged to fix the New Moon and the announcement thereof was regarded as a most solemn act. This helped to keep the solidarity of the Jewish people and the integrity of the institutions of Judaism intact. There is nothing that divides a people so much as the observance of the festivals on different days. Witness the attempt of all schismatic sects to tamper with the calendar. Jeroboam, the early Christians, the Karaites, and other sects, who sought to break up the solidarity of the Jewish people, began with changing the calendar and the dates of the festivals.

The observance of the second-day holiday by the people living at a distance from Jerusalem was in consonance with this principle. They felt that it was necessary that all Jews should keep the holidays on the same day and were willing to undergo the inconvenience of abstaining from labor on an additional day, so that they should not fall in any error and thus be separated from the central body. While the reason for this no more exists, observant Jews still adhere to this "Minhag" (custom), which has assumed the sanctity of law through long usage.

The three festivals of the Jewish calendar have a double meaning. Originally agricultural in character, they later assumed the additional historic meanings, with reference to the events clustering about the birth of the Jewish nation. In the course of time, the historic reasons became predominant, especially after the Jews had ceased to be an agricultural people.

Their value in arousing the historic consciousness of the Jew cannot be overestimated. They stir up feelings of loyalty and patriotism, by bringing to mind the glories of Israel's past. Still, it is the religious element in them that is most important. Loyalty in Jewish history was always identified with loyalty to Israel's God.

The agricultural element in these festivals should be brought out and explained even at the present time.

QUESTIONS

1. Why is the knowledge of the principles of the Jewish calendar important for the teacher?

2. What is the basis of the Jewish calendar, and why are the months alternately of 29 and 30 days each? Why is an exception made in the months of Heshvan and Kislev?

3. Explain the meaning of the Jewish leap year and why it was found necessary to establish the same.

4. How was the New Moon fixed in early times? Why was so much importance attached to the privilege of fixing the date of the New Moon?

5. What is the origin of the second-day Festival? Give reasons pro and con for its observance.

6. Why was the New Moon observed as a solemn festival? How much of its original character is still maintained?

7. Mention the months of the Jewish calendar and the chief festivals and fast days.

8. What is the original and the later meaning of the three most important festivals?

9. Explain the meaning of the term Jewish Consciousness.

10. What is the characteristic distinction between the Jewish national holidays and the national holidays of other peoples? Explain this in detail, giving examples.

III. PASSOVER

Significance of the Festival.—While originally an agricultural feast, marking the early harvest, the Passover festival later became so intimately associated with the events connected with the redemption of our ancestors from Egypt as to lose a great deal of its original meaning. In the ritual the festival is known as "the season of our redemption," and the other names by which it is designated, as "Passover" or "Pesach" or "the Feast of Unleavened Bread" (Hag ha-Mazzot) are also associated with the great event of the Exodus from Egypt. This was the epoch-making event in the early history of our people and many ceremonies and observances enjoined in the Bible find their reason in it. Even the Sabbath day, the most sacred institution of Judaism, is connected with the Exodus from Egypt (Deuteronomy 5:15). Forming the starting point in Israel's national existence, the redemption from Egypt may very well be compared with our own American Independence Day. That this event should never be forgotten, that Israel should always remember the day on which he became free from bondage, so that he might become God's people, numerous observances and ceremonies were prescribed in the Bible and by the Rabbis for the proper celebration of the great event year after year.

In their symbolic way, the Rabbis compared the Exodus from Egypt to the period of betrothal, the time when Israel became the bride of God, which

culminated in the complete union at Mt. Sinai. This idea finds expression in the custom of reading the book of the "Song of Songs" during the festival, although the idea of the awakening of nature to new life in the spring of the year is also suggested in this idyl.

Symbols of the Festival.—The most prominent features in the observance of Passover are the abstention from leavened bread during the week of the festival, the home ceremonies of the Seder nights and the special services in the synagogue. In Temple times, the offering of the Paschal lamb on the eve of Passover formed an important part in the proper observance of the Festival.

The Paschal Lamb.—In anticipation of the great miracle in connection with the plague of the first born, the Israelites in Egypt were commanded to slay a lamb or a goat, sprinkle some of its blood on the doorposts of their houses, roast its meat and eat it on the night of the departure. The blood on the doorposts was to be a sign for the Angel of Death, who was to slay the first born of the Egyptians, to pass over the houses of the Israelites. The meat of the lamb was to be eaten in family groups, all the members fully dressed for travel, with loins girded, shoes on their feet and staves in their hands, so as to be ready for the call to depart.

It was ordained that this ceremony become an annual institution, and, in Temple times, it was observed with much elaborate detail. All the people assembled in Jerusalem for the celebration of the feast divided themselves into groups or societies, each group or society provided with a lamb. When the lamb was killed and its blood poured on the

altar, the Levites chanted the Hallel (Psalms of Praise) accompanied by musical instruments. After the blood was sprinkled on the altar and the entrails removed, the lamb was taken home and roasted whole and then eaten by the assembled group amidst songs of thanksgiving. The teacher will do well to dwell upon this elaborate ceremony at length.

While the ceremony itself became obsolete with the destruction of the Temple, many of its elements have been retained in the Seder service. The roasted shank-bone on the Seder plate is the symbol of the Paschal lamb.

Unleavened Bread.—In more modern days, the most distinguishing feature of the festival is the abstention from eating leavened bread or any food prepared with leaven. The commandment to eat unleavened cakes, as a memorial of the Exodus, when the Israelites had to eat their bread in that state, because of their hurry to leave Egypt, carried with it the prohibition against partaking of any leavened bread during the festival week. This prohibition is repeated many times in the Bible and is extended to include not only the actual consumption of leavened bread, but also the possession of it. "Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses." (Exodus 12: 19.) Hence the custom of searching for leaven on the evening preceding the festival and the burning of all remaining leaven on the day preceding it. The Hebrew names for these customs are Bedikat Hamez and Biur Hamez, respectively.

Jews, at all times, were very scrupulous in the observance of this law and took great care not to violate it in the slightest detail. Not only did they

abstain from partaking of leavened bread or of any articles of food prepared with leaven, but they would not use on Passover even the utensils that were in use during the rest of the year, unless they underwent a thorough process of ritual cleansing, so that any particle of leaven absorbed in them might be destroyed or extracted. In most Jewish households, separate sets of dishes and kitchen utensils are kept from year to year for Passover use only.

The women of Israel, especially, have evinced their love and affection for this holy feast in many ways. Weeks before the festival preparations are begun by the pious Jewish housewife. The whole house undergoes a thorough cleansing, all leaven is gotten out of the way, and the best of everything is set aside for the holiday. All the members of the household are made to anticipate with joy the advent of the Passover. The poorest person endeavors to bring more cheer into the household by adding something new, something that was wished for, by renovating the house, providing new garments for the members of the family. No wonder, then, that the Passover season is looked upon as the happiest time in the year, by both young and old.

The Seder.—The Seder observed on the first two evenings of the festival, and in some families on the first evening only, retains many of the elements that made the observance of the festival so glorious in Temple times, although the main feature, the paschal lamb, is necessarily omitted. It emphasizes God's protection over His people Israel, and helps to bring out most prominently the hand of God in Jewish history. In times of trouble and distress, of persecution and dire misfortune, the message of

the Seder always helped to brighten the anguished heart and cheer the drooping spirit. God, the redeemer of Israel, "who never sleepeth nor slumbereth," who has shown His love and protection to Israel in Egypt, will yet again bring salvation to Israel and redeem it from the different kinds of slaveries to which it has been subjected. This sentiment prompted the unfortunate Jews in Spain to hide in cellars and caves and celebrate the Seder at the risk of their lives. This sentiment gave the Jews of the Middle Ages the courage and hope to persevere in their religion and endure all hardships for its sake. All the dangers of the ritual blood accusation, all the horrors of the Inquisition, could not make them give up this beautiful ceremony, which always stimulated them with new hopes, with new faith and new courage to battle for the right and suffer for it, if need be.

There is also a personal element in the Seder which should be emphasized at this point. The union of the members of every household around the Seder table, all moved by a common emotion and participating in a common worship, has ever been one of the most potent influences in preserving and strengthening family relationships.

Family loyalty and family pride are among the chief sources of our continued existence and national greatness. The novelist, the poet and the artist could find no better theme for the play of their imagination than this happy family reunion, brought about annually at the Seder service, when Jewish chastity, family purity and family devotion are brought out in greatest relief. The Jewish home then assumes its real function. It becomes a sanctuary of the Lord, where love, loyalty and devotion to a sacred cause are the dominating fac-

week days of the festival, the portion from the Prophets (Haftarah) is taken from Ezekiel (37: 1-14), where that beautiful picture of the valley of the dry bones restored to new life by the will of God is intended to strengthen our hope for the revival of our ideals and the renewal of God's covenant with us.

For further explanation of the details of the Seder ceremony, the teacher is referred to the following:

Jewish Encyclopedia, articles "Haggadah shel Pesach," "Passover Sacrifice," "Seder."

Friedlander, "The Jewish Religion," pp. 379-388.

Green, "The Revised Haggadah," London, 1897.

Cowen, "The Seder Service."

Rosenau, "Seder Haggadah" and "Jewish Ceremonial Institutions and Customs."

"The Union Haggadah." Central Conference of American Rabbis.

The Agricultural Element.—The agricultural element in the observance of the Passover festival is not entirely neglected even in the present time. Passover marked the period when the first barley, sown in the winter, had become ripe. In accordance with an ancient interpretation of Leviticus 23: 11, an offering, consisting of an Omer (about half a gallon) of barley, was brought to the sanctuary on the second day of Passover. The enjoyment of the new fruit was prohibited until this offering was brought, indicating the dependence of the farmer on God's gracious bounty, to whose glory the first fruit is offered as a symbol of gratitude. From this day, 49 days or seven complete weeks were counted, and on the fiftieth day the harvest feast (Shabuot) was celebrated. This cere-

mony is called "counting the omer," and is still literally observed by devout Jews, who, after the evening service of each day during these seven weeks (days of Sefirah or Omer), solemnly pronounce the number of days since the second day of Passover, preceding this with an appropriate blessing.

Note.—During this period of Sefirah, i.e., the time intervening between Passover and Shabuot, and especially during the month of Iyar, many misfortunes happened to the Jews, especially during the time of the Roman Emperor Hadrian and later during the Crusades in the Middle Ages. These days are thus filled with sad memories of massacres and persecutions, and the custom was established to abstain from weddings and other festivities and rejoicings during this period. The thirty-third day of the Omer (Lag b'Omer) is called "the scholars' festival" and is observed as a semi-holiday, because on this day a plague that had raged among the disciples of R. Akiba is said to have stopped.

Another ceremony, reminiscent of the agricultural life of our ancestors, is the reading of a prayer for dew (Tal) during the morning service of the first day of Passover. With the advent of Spring, when the rainy season in Palestine came to an end, the Jewish farmer prayed that the refreshing dew might descend on all vegetation during the hot season that was coming. From that day on the regular prayer for rain is discontinued.

The Other Days of the Festival.—All the eight (or seven) days of the festival are alike in regard to the prohibition against partaking of leaven. Only the first and last two days (or one day), however, are observed as holy days, when no work is

done. The four (or five) middle days are known as Hol ha-Moed and are observed as semi-holidays. While it is permitted to attend to the ordinary occupations during these days, the solemnity and joyousness of the feast are emphasized in the special daily service by the reading of the Hallel and the special selections from the Torah, as well as by the abstention from such kinds of labor as are unnecessary and can easily be postponed. The seventh day of the feast is associated with the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea, hence the Song of Moses is then read from the Torah and references to this great miracle are made in the services of the day.

RÉSUMÉ

The passion for freedom from all kinds of bondage has characterized the Jew from most ancient antiquity. The spirit of democracy breathes throughout the sacred legislation, incorporated in the Bible and later developed by the Rabbis. The allegiance to the one God, the father of all, always the dominating factor in Jewish life, precluded any submission to the yoke of tyranny and despotism. "For unto me the children of Israel are servants; they are My servants whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt" (Leviticus 25:55), to which the Rabbis quaintly add, "They are my servants, but not servants of servants." The fatherhood of God carries with it the idea of human equality. Remember that the ideal of human liberty, so strongly emphasized in the celebration of the Passover festival, has become the possession of civilized humanity only within the past century. Remember that it is only fifty years now since we had to carry

on a destructive war in our own land in order to vindicate this glorious principle. Remember that more than one-half of the human race is even now still held in bondage to the rule of tyrants and their underlings. Israel proclaimed the ideals of liberty and human equality thousands of years ago, and the nations of the world only now begin to realize the truth and wholesomeness of these ideals.

The liberty symbolized by the Passover festival, however, is the freedom to devote oneself to the higher kind of service, to the service of the one God. Israel was redeemed from Egyptian bondage for the purpose of assuming the higher duties imposed upon it at Mt. Sinai. It was God who redeemed Israel, in order to take it unto Himself as His people (Exodus 6:7), the standard-bearer of His religion.

As the national birthday of Israel, Passover stands out most conspicuously among the holidays of the Jewish year. It is thus perhaps the most powerful means of bringing the Jew in closer touch with his past history. His historic consciousness becomes alert and stimulated by the observance of this festival. Note the section in the Haggadah beginning with "It is incumbent upon every Israelite, in every generation, to look upon himself as if he had actually gone forth from Egypt." The Jew of the present is made to feel more strongly his relationship with the past of Israel, he becomes inspired with the glories of his people in the past and its hopes for a still more glorious future.

This idea finds its most beautiful expression in the Seder service. The family, the national unit, assembled around one table, partaking of one service, moved by one great emotion, symbolizes the union of all Israel, past, present and future. The

child, propounding the questions to his elders, is made to realize that he is a member of even a larger family, the house of Jacob, with a history stretching back into hoary antiquity, with hopes and aspirations for a grand future, with great ideals for the betterment of God's world and the improvement of the lot of God's children. The symbols of the Seder are the concrete manifestations of Israel's proud consciousness of the possession of the precious right of freedom, of which no priest or potentate could deprive him, and his yearnings to acquire this right for the rest of mankind.

The unleavened bread, the symbol of the haste with which the Israelites had to leave Egypt, so that they could not wait for the dough to ferment, is also called "the bread of affliction" (Deuteronomy 16:3), reminding us of the poverty and affliction of our ancestors while under Pharaoh's yoke. The unleavened bread is thus at the same time the symbol of slavery and of deliverance.

Emphasize the loving care with which the Passover is ushered in into Jewish households, the joy which its advent brings to all hearts, the many sacrifices willingly made in its behalf. Weeks before, preparations are begun for the holy festival in joyous anticipation. The process of baking the Mazzot by every family individually was regarded as a great event and looked forward to with pleasure, especially by the younger members of the family. The joy that accompanied the performance of a Mizwah, a religious act, needs new emphasis at present.

The agricultural reason for the observance of the festival finds expression in several ceremonies. Refer to Chapter II for the manner of treating this special phase of the subject in modern times.

QUESTIONS

1. Explain the significance of the Passover festival, with reference to its origin and later development. Mention the various names by which it is known and the meaning of each.

2. Describe the origin of the Paschal offering and the details of its observance in later times. What symbol commemorates this offering?

3. What does the unleavened bread symbolize? Why is it also called "the bread of affliction"?

4. Describe the value of the Seder service as a means of preserving national solidarity as well as family loyalty.

5. Give a description of the Seder table, explaining briefly the meaning and purpose of each of the symbols.

6. What is the significance of the "cup of Elijah"?

7. Explain the term "counting the Omer." Why are the Omer days observed as a period of mourning?

8. What is meant by "Hol ha-Moed"? How are these days observed?

9. How did the ideal of personal liberty express itself in Jewish life in the past? What interpretation is given to the ideal of human freedom in the Jewish religion?

IV. THE FEAST OF WEEKS (SHABUOT)

Meaning of Festival.—Shabuot, or the Feast of Weeks, sometimes also called "Pentecost" (Greek for the "fiftieth day"), like Passover and Sukkot, was primarily a purely agricultural feast. The harvest season in ancient Palestine extended over seven weeks. Fifty days after the first Omer of barley was offered on the altar (see Chapter III), an offering of two loaves was brought to the Temple to celebrate the beginning of the wheat harvest. These seven weeks, beginning with the second day of Passover, were carefully counted, day by day, and the fiftieth day was celebrated as the harvest festival, or the Festival of the First Fruits.

An additional meaning, which, in the course of time, entirely overshadowed the original significance of the day, was later given to the Festival. It was celebrated as the "Season of the Giving of the Law" at Mount Sinai. In the Bible itself, the exact day of the Revelation is not given, although the Scriptures mention that it occurred in the "third month." Tradition fixed the day as the sixth day of Sivan, coinciding with the day of the ancient harvest festival.

The First Fruits (Bikkurim).—The natural impulse to dedicate to God the first and the best one possesses (compare the sacrifices of Cain and Abel), thus evincing one's gratitude to God and dependence on Him, finds its most beautiful expression in

the ancient ceremonies connected with the festival of Shabuot. The Festival is designated as the "Day of the First Fruits" (Numbers 28:26), and, besides the offering of the two loaves, the first fruits of the wheat, the festival ushered in the season, extending to the feast of Tabernacles, when the farmer brought the first fruits of his field to Jerusalem and recited in the presence of the priest that beautiful prayer, preserved for us in Deuteronomy 26:5-10.

The whole procedure of selecting the first fruits (Bikkurim) and carrying them to Jerusalem was attended with several inspiring ceremonies. On visiting his orchard or his field and beholding a ripe grape, fig or any other fruit, the farmer would tie a string around it and say, "This shall be among the Bikkurim." Later on, these marked fruits were collected and deposited in baskets, some of which were richly ornamented, and then carried in state to Jerusalem. Those who lived at a great distance brought dried fruits, while those living near by carried the original fresh fruits designated for that purpose. The farmers of a certain district assembled in the largest town of the district and remained in the open market over night. At dawn they were summoned by the announcement of the officer in charge, exclaiming, "Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion, unto the Lord our God." Preceded by the sacrificial ox, with horns gilt and head crowned with olive leaves, the pilgrims proceeded on their way with the accompaniment of music to the Holy City. When quite near Jerusalem, they sent a messenger, who announced their arrival. Officers from the Temple came out to meet them, and all artisans on the road stopped from their work, rose from their seats and extended a hearty welcome to the

pilgrims. On reaching the Temple, they were greeted by the Levites, chanting the verse, "I will extol Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast raised me up, and hast not suffered mine enemies to rejoice over me" (Psalms 30:2). Then each man recited the declaration, as given in Deuteronomy 26:3, and deposited his basket with the priest (see Hochman, "Jerusalem Temple Festivities," London, 1909).

Aside from the intrinsic beauty of this ceremony, which appeals so strongly to the imagination, it contains also several wholesome moral and religious lessons, upon which the teacher should not neglect to dilate. The idea that all wealth comes from God and that the possession of it is given to man only as a trust, which he may use to proper and wholesome ends, is strikingly emphasized in this ceremony. The farmer, more than any other man, is conscious of his dependence upon a kind Providence. He knows that all his labors in the field would be of no avail unless God sent the rain in its season and the sunshine in its time. He, therefore, feels that the first fruit of his labors belong to God, and only after this sacred obligation has been discharged does he permit himself the enjoyment of the products of his field and orchard. The expression given to this sentiment of dependence on a benign Providence in words of praise and thanksgiving to God shows that the Israelite of old fully realized that the source of all blessings was God, to whom alone everything belonged.

The ceremony further emphasized the responsibility of wealth, "And thou shalt rejoice in all the good which the Lord thy God hath given unto thee, and unto thy house, thou, and the Levite, and the stranger that is in the midst of thee" (Deuteronomy 26:11). The wealth, with which God has

blessed him, he must share with the less fortunate ones, "the Levite and the stranger." The *obligation* that the rich owe to the poor, the *duty* of sharing one's wealth with the widow and the orphan, the stranger and the destitute, has always formed a unique feature in Jewish life. The term "charity" has no equivalent in the Hebrew language. "Zedakah" (justice) is the nearest approach to what is designated by us today as charity. Everything belongs to God, and when we give of our possession to the poor, we are only doing God's will, as His trustees. The very blessing of wealth carries with it this sacred obligation, the discharge of which is in agreement with the command of God. The possession of wealth is regarded by some people as the greatest joy in itself. They find satisfaction in hoarding up large sums of money, and would not part with it, even for their own needs. Such pleasure is sordid, vulgar and ungodly. The greatest joy of wealth is when it is shared with the "Levite and the stranger." It is only then that one may truly "rejoice before God."

The Festival of Revelation.—After the destruction of the Temple, when the Jews ceased to be an agricultural people, the significance of the festival of Shabuot underwent a great change. It then assumed the great historic significance, commemorating the Revelation on Mt. Sinai and the proclamation of the Ten Commandments. While traces of the earlier meaning of the festival have been retained, the historic reason, because of its great importance and its universal application, has become the dominating motive for the observance of the feast.

The work of the deliverance of the Israelites

from Egyptian bondage was not complete until the Revelation, fifty days later. The Israelites were taken out of Egypt for a certain purpose, and that purpose was accomplished only after they reached Mt. Sinai. From the very first, the purpose was made clear to Moses (see Exodus 3:12), and constantly repeated by him in his numerous interviews with Pharaoh. The Israelites were enslaved, oppressed and maltreated. Their cry went up to God, and the task was set before Moses to become God's messenger and liberate his people from the oppressive yoke. They were, however, to be liberated only as God's people. They were to become free so that they might become servants of God. They were to realize that it was the Lord their God who brought them out of the bondage of the Egyptians (see Exodus 6:7). The great proclamation made to the Israelites from Mt. Sinai was thus the completion of the work of liberation.

The close relationship between liberty and law is thus brought out in greatest relief. Freedom may become most dangerous, if it is not properly regulated and guided. The Revelation emphasizes the fact that liberty is not an end, but a condition necessary in the attainment of the highest ends of life. The Israelites were liberated from the yoke of bondage, so that they might devote themselves to the service of God. "Only those are free," say our Rabbis, "who devote themselves to the observance of God's laws." A Declaration of Independence which is not immediately followed by a just and equitable Constitution may bring untold miseries to a nation. The Revelation thus becomes the crowning glory of the Exodus. In the poetical language of the Rabbis, "God betrothed Israel as his bride on Passover and wedded her on Shabuot."

The Ten Commandments.—The Ten Commandments, the proclamation of which is commemorated by this festival, have justly been called the alphabet of the religious and moral life, the very foundation upon which all human conduct should be based. They are universal and eternal. Both Jew and Gentile place them at the forefront of their codes of law. They have exercised their beneficent influence on human life throughout all generations, because of their simplicity and comprehensiveness. Their universality and eternal application are the best proofs of their divine origin.

The Jew naturally experiences a thrill of justifiable pride at the thought that it was to him that this grand proclamation was first made. He feels grateful for the distinction thus conferred upon him in that it was vouchsafed to the genius of the Jew to apprehend and effectively to proclaim to the world these fundamentals of morality. For this distinction he expresses his gratitude on many occasions in his liturgy. This feeling of pride, however, always carried with it the feeling of greater responsibility. To be a member of the "kingdom of priests and the holy nation" confers on one many privileges, for which one ought to be grateful, but it also imposes many duties which one must discharge in order to be worthy of the name. The priest must be more careful in his conduct, more particular in regulating his life, more scrupulous in the discharge of his duties, because he is looked up to as a model for others to follow. This is what the Rabbis meant by the term "Kiddush ha-Shem" (the sanctification of God's name), and its opposite, "Hillul ha-Shem" (the profanation of God's name). An unseemly act on the part of a member of the "chosen people" re-

flects unfavorably upon Him who chose them, and causes, so to say, a stain on God's name; while a noble deed, a heroic act on the part of God's chosen people, helps to glorify God's name on earth. These thoughts should dominate us, especially on the recurrence of this glorious festival. Justly proud of the great distinction of being God's chosen people, humbly grateful for the great honor, we should also be thoroughly conscious of the many responsibilities it brings with it and endeavor to discharge them loyally and faithfully.

Services of the Festival.—Unlike Passover and Sukkot, Shabuot has no distinctive ceremony. All labor is forbidden, as on other holidays. The services in the synagogue consist in the reading of the regular festival ritual. The portion of the law read on the first day is the description of the story of Revelation as recorded in Exodus 19 and 20, while on the second day the portion from Deuteronomy 15:19-16:22, which gives an account of the three pilgrim festivals, is read. The Haftarah for the first day is taken from the first chapter of Ezekiel, where the majesty of God is described, while on the second day, the "Prayer of Habakuk" (Habakuk 3) is read, because it contains references to the Revelation. In many communities, the Book of Ruth is read during the festival, because it contains the most complete and most charming picture of agricultural life in ancient Palestine found in the Bible. The fact that Ruth evinced such a strong faith in the God of Israel as to leave her family and her native place and follow the wretched Naomi to Bethlehem, makes the book the more suitable for this festival. Among many Jews, it is customary to spend the first night of Shabuot in

reading selections from the Torah and the Prophets, as well as from Rabbinic literature which are compiled in a book called Tikkun. Some spend the whole night in this exercise, while others stay awake only till midnight. The custom of eating food prepared with milk on Shabuot is probably due to the fact that the Torah is compared to milk in several places in the Bible. It is also customary to decorate the synagogues and the homes with flowers and plants, suggestive of God's gifts through nature.

On the festival of Shabuot, the Jewish child was first initiated into the study of the Jewish religion and the Hebrew language. This was accompanied, in the Middle Ages, with a number of quaint and symbolic ceremonies. (Read Schechter, "Studies in Judaism," pp. 302-3; Abrahams, "Jewish Life in the Middle Ages," p. 348 ff.; read also Abrahams, "Festival Studies," chapters II and XII.) In more modern times, where the ceremony of confirmation has been introduced, this ceremony is most appropriately observed on the feast of Shabuot.

RÉSUMÉ

Both in its primary agricultural character and its later historic nature, the religious significance of this festival is most potent. As the harvest festival, it emphasizes the gratitude we owe to God for the blessings of abundance and plenty. It is by His will and through His command that the forces of nature supply the needs of man and add to his comfort. All man's efforts and labors, while necessary and required, will not succeed, unless God blesses his efforts and makes his labors prosper. Hence the recognition that wealth is acquired not

so much by human ingenuity and work, as by the will of God.

Judaism permits the proper use of wealth. It is opposed to all manner of asceticism and unnecessary self-abnegation. It enjoins, however, the duty that the rich owe to the poor with such emphasis as to identify charity with justice. Charity is compulsory, according to the Jewish law. Giving is a religious duty, repeatedly emphasized in the Bible. The Jews were designated by Rabbinic tradition as "the merciful, the sons of the merciful," and this characteristic they retained throughout their long and varied history. The Book of Ruth, read on this festival, gives us a picture of the manner in which the poor were cared for in ancient Palestine, at the time of the harvest.

Shabuot, however, has in later times become the festival of religion par excellence. It commemorates that great event when the nation of liberated slaves was instructed in the manner of life, which a free nation should lead. Physical liberty was not the end of the exodus from Egypt, but the condition which made it possible for them to take the Ten Commandments as the norm of their future national and individual existence.

This law, which gave character and purpose to the liberated slaves, has since become the law of all civilized humanity. Truly may the Jew feel proud of the distinction of being the first to whom this law was entrusted. But the distinction carries with it increased responsibilities. Noblesse oblige. The Jew must prove by his life that he is worthy of this distinction. He must be most careful, most rigorous with himself, most circumspect. He must constantly guard against "Hillul ha-Shem." (Read Deuteronomy 4:5-9.)

While there is no special and distinctive ceremony prescribed for the feast of Shabuot, the many observances of the day which were elaborated by the people in the course of the centuries evince the great love and affection the Jew always has had for the law. The law was never a burden to him, but a source of the greatest delight.

QUESTIONS

1. What was the agricultural significance of the festival?

2. Describe briefly the ceremony connected with the offering of the "First Fruits." What important lessons may be learned from this ceremony for present-day religious and moral conduct?

3. What relation of liberty to law does this festival teach?

4. What are the emotions that the reading of the Ten Commandments stir up in the heart of every Jew?

5. Explain the terms "Kiddush ha-Shem" and "Hillul ha-Shem." Illustrate by examples.

6. Why is the Book of Ruth read on this festival? What should be our attitude towards sincere proselytes?

7. Give the reason for the custom of decorating the synagogue and home with flowers. Of eating food prepared with milk.

8. Why is the ceremony of confirmation usually observed on Shabuot?

V. THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES (SUKKOT)

Significance of Festival.—The primary significance of this festival also was connected with the agricultural life of ancient Israel. In Exodus 23:16 and 34:22 this festival is designated as the "Feast of Ingathering," and in Deuteronomy 16:13, where it is named "Feast of Tabernacles" (as also in Leviticus 23:34), it is directly connected also with the event of the completion of the harvest season, "after thou hast gathered in from thy threshing-floor and from thy wine-press." The original character of the feast is thus plainly shown to have been that of thanksgiving to God for the bounties of nature during the past year.

The historical significance of the feast is mentioned in Leviticus 23:42-43, immediately after the agricultural reason is given (ib. v. 39). "Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are home-born in Israel shall dwell in booths, that your generations may know, that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt; I am the Lord your God." The period that the Israelites spent in the wilderness may be regarded as one of the most important epochs in Jewish history. It was then that Israel's character and destiny were formed. Under the guidance of the great law-giver, the nation of slaves was transformed into God's chosen people. Their faith in God had to be nurtured, their comprehension of His holy law had to be developed, and their

character as the religious people had to be molded. It was then that God's protection and care of them were shown most plainly. His benign Providence manifested itself to them at every step. (Read Deuteronomy 8:2-18; Jeremiah 2:6-7.) To commemorate this important period and to give ever new emphasis to the idea of the direction of God in human affairs and His special care of His people Israel, the ancient Feast of Ingathering was given the additional historical meaning, and the ancient ceremonies connected with it were made to represent also the ideas and events connected with Israel's national birth and formative period in the wilderness.

The Sukkah.—"Ye shall dwell in booths seven days." There is no definite description given in the Bible of the form of the booth and the manner of its construction, nor do we find there an exact definition of the term "dwell." Tradition, however, has preserved for us definite rules and regulations regarding the building of the Sukkah and the manner in which the ceremony should be observed. The main stress is laid on the manner of roofing it. The Sukkah must not be covered with wide boards, but rather with branches or leaves, sparsely laid, so that the stars might be perceived through the covering. It is, therefore, a very slight protection against the wind or rain, thus emphasizing the need we always have of God's protection and guidance. The Israelites travelling in the wilderness, exposed to many dangers and trials, found protection in God, their loving Father. The pillar of cloud led them on their way by day and the pillar of fire lighted the way for them at night. (Exodus 13:21, 22.) In leaving his house for the frail booth, the Israelite of today lives

again the experiences of his ancestors in the wilderness and gives new emphasis to the lesson they learned, to trust in God and to rely entirely on His merciful Providence.

An interesting description of the manner in which the Sukkah was erected in ancient times is found in Nehemiah 8:14-18. The proclamation was made to the people: "Go forth unto the mount and fetch olive branches, and branches of wild olive, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written." "So the people went forth, and brought them, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the broad place of the water gate and in the broad place of the gate of Ephraim."

The construction of the Sukkah in later times was looked forward to with pleasurable anticipation by young and old. While the material may have been prepared weeks ahead, the actual building did not commence until the night after the Day of Atonement. Wearied after the day's fasting and exacting religious exercises, the observant Jew displayed his devotion to his religious practices by proceeding at once, with hammer in hand, to the performance of a new Mizwah, to place the first stake for the erection of the Sukkah. Children were especially encouraged to take part in the building and the decoration of the Sukkah. The decoration consisted mainly of fruits and flowers, the best and finest obtainable at this season of the year, although the wealthier Jews also brought to the Sukkah their finest tapestries, furniture and pictures. (See Rosenau, "Jewish Ceremonial Institutions and Customs," pp. 126-7.)

Show to the child pictures illustrating the build-

ing and decoration of the Sukkah. (Read Abrahams, "Festival Studies," Chapter X.)

The Sukkah is to serve as the "dwelling" house during the seven days of the Feast, where most of one's time should be spent. In cold climates only the meals are taken in the Sukkah, although some also sleep there. In case of rain or inclement weather, the observant Jew satisfies himself with reciting the Kiddush in the Sukkah. A special blessing is pronounced at each meal over the commandment to dwell in booths.

The Four Species.—The original nature of the festival, as a thanksgiving day for the blessings of the harvest, is preserved in the ceremony of taking the four species of vegetation prescribed in Leviticus 23:40: "And ye shall take you on the first day the fruit of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook, and ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days." The traditional interpretation fixes the meaning of these four species to include the citron (Etrog), the palm branch (Lulab), three myrtle twigs (Hadassim), and two willow branches (Arabot). These are to serve as symbols of the entire realm of vegetation, which has been blest by the gracious bounty of God. The myrtle and willow branches are tied together with the branch of the palm tree and held in the right hand, while the citron is held in the left hand. After the appropriate blessing is pronounced, the four species are waved in the direction of the four points of the compass; also forward and backward, upward and downward; thereby acknowledging the sovereignty of God over the whole universe. They are also held and thus waved during the recitation of the Hallel, and are

held in the hand also during the procession round the synagogue at the Hoshana prayer, at the end of the service. The same ceremony is observed during the morning services of each day of the festival, except on the Sabbath day. (In the Temple this ceremony was observed also on the Sabbath, but in the Synagogue it was omitted on the Sabbath, because of the apprehension that one might carry the Lulab from place to place, which is forbidden on the Sabbath day. The same reason applies also to the omission of the use of the Shofar on Rosh ha-Shanah, when it falls on a Sabbath.)

Several beautiful symbolic interpretations are given to this ceremony by the Rabbis. The four species are compared by them to the four important organs of the human body: the heart (etrog), the spinal cord (lulab), the eye (myrtle leaf), and the lips (willow leaf), suggesting the thought that all the members of the body should unite in proclaiming God's glory and singing His praises (compare Psalms 35:10). Again these four species were compared to four classes of Jews: the pious and learned (Etrog, possessing taste and odor), the learned but not pious (Lulab, having taste but no odor), pious and not learned (Myrtle, having odor and no taste), neither pious nor learned (Willow, having neither taste nor odor). All of these have their uses in the world, as all these species of vegetation have their uses in the economy of nature. The union of all the elements in the nation, even as the four species are held together, will give strength and permanence to Jewish ideals and secure national solidarity.

Pious Israelites are very particular in selecting the citron and the palm-branch. The former must have no blemish; its shape and color must be perfect, and no expense is spared to obtain the finest

and most beautiful fruit for the occasion. In the selecting of the Lulab also care is taken that it should be perfect, its leaves attached to each other and entirely green. These fruits are imported from warm climates, preferably from Palestine, and their prices are sometimes quite high. Frequently two or three families unite in purchasing these species, although most synagogues provide several sets for those who are unable to purchase such species for themselves.

A Season for Rejoicing.—The Feast of Tabernacles is described in the liturgy as "the season of our rejoicing." To be cheerful and happy is a religious duty with the Jew. His is not a religion that enjoins self-castigation and asceticism. One who consciously denies himself the legitimate pleasures of life is called a sinner by the Rabbis. God's presence, they say, does not abide with the gloomy and morose spirit, but with the cheerful and joyous nature. The Nazirite, they further assert, who consciously denied himself the pleasures of the world by abstaining from wine, had to bring a sin-offering to atone for his transgression. The spirit of optimism, joy and cheer characterizes all our festivals. This idea receives special emphasis in the cult of the modern Hasidim. (See Schechter, "Studies in Judaism," pp. 31-2.)

It is, however, with regard to the Festival of Tabernacles that rejoicing is repeatedly commanded. Its celebration in Temple times was accompanied with a number of ceremonies of merry-making and festivity. There was one ceremony in particular,—the Libation of Water, which gave occasion to a great deal of festivity, so that it was said that "whoever has not witnessed it has never seen

a real festivity." A golden pitcher filled with water from the pool of Siloah was, amid trumpet blasts, poured into a tube in the altar, together with a libation of wine. On this occasion the most distinguished Israelites took part in a torch-dance in the Temple precincts, reciting psalms and hymns, while the Levites were singing and playing various musical instruments. The celebration was continued throughout the whole night of the second day of the festival. In a modified form, these festivities have been continued even after the destruction of the Temple. The observant Jews assemble on the nights of the week-days of the festival and spend the evenings in reciting various hymns, chanting appropriate songs and partaking of refreshments. The old name, Simhat Bet ha-Sho'ebah ("the rejoicing at the drawing of the water") also was retained. (Read the note by H. M. Adler on pp. 249-251 of the volume for Tabernacles in the new edition of "Services of the Synagogue," London, 1908.)

The manner of rejoicing in which the Israelites indulged during this festival, however, was quite different from the festivities accompanying the completion of the harvest and the vintage among the heathen nations of antiquity. "And thou shalt rejoice before the Lord thy God." The joy of the Israelite was chastened by the thought that it was a religious joy, and that God was always with him. The debauchery and entire abandon to sensuous pleasures that marked the Bacchanalian feasts were unknown to the Jew. He also rejoiced, but his joy was dignified, chaste and wholesome. His was a joy hallowed by religion and consecrated by the presence of God. His songs were hymns of praise and thanksgiving to the Father of all. His pleasures were derived from the consciousness of the

nearness of God and His protection over all his affairs. Throughout the Middle Ages, and even in more modern times, the Jew celebrated his festivals with joy and cheer, indeed, but always tempered by religion. Hence, the proverbial sobriety of the Jew, which helped so much to preserve and strengthen his powers of endurance.

His joy, in order to be complete, must be shared with the less fortunate ones of his brethren. "And thou shalt rejoice on thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, and the Levite, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gate" (Deuteronomy 16:14). His must not be a selfish joy. He must remember the needs of the poor and the destitute, and see to it that their wants be supplied, so that they also might rejoice. (See Chapter IV.)

Hosha'na Rabba.—The Feast of Tabernacles, beginning on the fifteenth day of Tishri, is celebrated for seven days, the first two days (or one day) only being observed as holidays. The remaining five (or six) days are observed as Hol ha-Mo'ed (the week days of the Feast). During all the seven days the Hallel (Psalms 113-118) is recited and a special prayer, having the refrain of Hosha'na ("Oh, save!") is added at the end of the service. In Temple times, a procession was made around the altar with the "four species" while this prayer was chanted, and on the seventh day, seven such processions were made and additional hymns, each having the same refrain, were chanted, and the Shofar was blown. Hence was given to the seventh day the name of Hosha'na Rabba (the great Hosha'na). Besides this ceremony, on the seventh day the altar

was decorated with willow branches, and besides the willow branches tied with the Lulab, each one held also a willow twig in his hands during the procession. The ceremony has been maintained since, even after the destruction of the Temple, and the circuits are made around the Bemah (the pulpit in the middle of the synagogue) and the extra twig of willow branches is taken and struck at the end of the service until its leaves fall off. This ceremony has been explained to express the hope of resurrection and of the Messianic age. The leafless trees in the autumn, symbolized by the leafless twigs, will resume new life and produce fresh leaves and flowers and fruit, after being watered by the rain and the dew which God will send to refresh nature. The lifeless body, as well as Israel, apparently without life and vigor, will be given new life and new strength in God's own time and by God's will. (Compare the figure in Isaiah 6:13.) Other mystical meanings have later been attached to this ceremony.

The night of Hosha'na Rabba is spent by the pious in reading the whole book of Deuteronomy, the book of Psalms and a number of selections from Rabbinic literature. Refreshments are served during the time of the religious exercises, to maintain the joyous nature of the festival. The service in the morning partakes of the nature of the service on the Holy Days and the day has come to be regarded as the conclusion of the period of judgment. This idea is of much later origin, giving, as it were, another opportunity for the sinner to repent and make amends. (Read Abrahams' "Festival Studies," Chapters III, XVI and XVII; Rosenau, "Jewish Ceremonial Institutions and Customs," pp. 99-100.)

Shemini 'Azeret.—The last two days of the festival are regarded as a separate feast and have a special name—Shemini 'Azeret (the eighth day of Solemn Assembly). The ninth day is, in addition, also known as Simhat Torah (the Rejoicing of the Law). No special ceremony marks the observance of the eighth day. It is customary to continue taking the meals in the Sukkah on this day, but the "four species" are not taken then. The morning service is marked by the additional prayer for rain, inserted in the Musaf (additional) service. In some communities the book of Ecclesiastes is read on this day, perhaps to sober somewhat the joyousness of the occasion by the pessimistic note of the book. (Another opinion connects this custom with the rabbinic interpretation of verse 2 in chapter 11, "Give a portion to seven and also to eight," as referring to this festival.)

The festive spirit of the season reaches its highest climax on the last day of the festival. On this day, Simhat Torah, the annual reading of the Pentateuch is completed and begun again, and the event is accompanied with much rejoicing. During the evening service of the ninth day all the scrolls are taken out of the ark and carried in procession around the synagogue, while appropriate hymns and songs are chanted by the Hazzan (precentor), choir and congregation. Children are encouraged to take part in the procession, carrying flags bearing appropriate inscriptions, with burning tapers. They are also given the honor of being called up to the reading of the Law, even if they are not yet of the Bar Mizwah age. Nuts and raisins are thrown down to them from the women's gallery and they are also given other refreshments in the synagogue. These ceremonies are repeated during the morning service

of Simhat Torah. It is regarded a special privilege to be called up to the reading of the last portion of the Pentateuch (Hatan Torah, i.e., Bridegroom of the Law) and of the first portion of the Pentateuch (Hatan Bereshit, i.e., Bridegroom of the Beginning). The persons so honored would invite the members of the congregation to their homes, where a feast was prepared for them. The day was then spent in merry-making and joyous festivity, a fitting conclusion to the "season of our rejoicing." (See Rosenau, "Jewish Ceremonial Institutions and Customs," pp. 100-102.)

RÉSUMÉ

The three pilgrim feasts, originally connected with the agricultural life of ancient Israel, have later become associated with the various stages in the development of the Jewish nation:—The birth of the nation as a political entity (Passover), the character given to that nation as a religious people (Shabuot), and the development of that double nature during the long period of wandering (Sukkot). The Jewish consciousness is thus aroused at the periodic recurrence of these feasts, by the ceremonies they enjoin and the memories they bring up.

The Sukkah, recalling as it does God's protection over Israel in the most trying period of its existence, also has its religious lesson for the present age. Trust in God and reliance on His merciful providence drive away all gloom and sorrow and give to life its most sustaining tonic—hope. Without it, life is not worth living. In their symbolic way, the Rabbis interpreted the phrase, "And they believed in the Lord and in His servant Moses" (Exodus 14: 31), which is immediately followed by the words,

"Then sang Moses and the children of Israel," that because they believed in God they were able to chant songs. It is faith that gives one hope and cheer, that brightens the saddest moments in life and makes life worth while even in most trying circumstances.

It is because of this abiding faith in the goodness and mercy of God that the Jew regarded happiness a duty and unnecessary self-denial a sin. "And thou shalt rejoice before the Lord thy God" is the keynote of the Festival of Tabernacles. In his own way the Jew endeavored always to get the best out of life. In spite of his many trials and troubles, the Jew was able to maintain his cheerful spirit and hopeful mood. If everything about him was dark and gloomy, if he could find no comfort in the conditions under which he lived, he turned his gaze to the remote future and indulged in the glorious dreams of a Messianic Era, as pictured for him by Prophet and seer, Rabbi and poet. The joys and festivities indulged in on this festival are emblematic of the optimistic view of life the Jew always held.

Since life is sacred, since there is nothing profane in human actions and conduct, joy also must be hallowed by the spirit of religion. The harvest festivals of other peoples of antiquity were accompanied with a great deal of debauchery and licentiousness. Joy to them meant the abandon to the lower inclinations of man. The Jew derived the greatest amount of pleasure from an abandon to the highest yearning of the human soul. He also indulged in the pleasures of life, but he hallowed these and made them savor of the divine.

To express his joy and gratitude he used in his ceremonies the "four species" of vegetation, by

which he symbolized his recognition of God's favors during the period of the harvest. By so doing the Jew declared again the sovereignty of God over nature, and the dependence of man upon God.

Hosha'na Rabba with its quaint ceremonies, as observed in later times, is also pregnant with valuable lessons for all ages. It is never too late to repent. God is ready to receive the sinner and grant him forgiveness, whenever he comes with a contrite heart and is ready to make amends for sins committed.

The love of the Jew for his Torah, his affection for the law of God entrusted to him and his devotion to its study are displayed especially on Simhat Torah. Then the most dignified Rabbis indulged in merry-making and rejoicing, giving public acknowledgment of their gratitude for having been made the custodians of the holy Law. To indicate their devotion to the study of this Law, they began its reading anew immediately upon the completion of the Pentateuch, so that there should be no interruption in the study of the Torah.

QUESTIONS

1. Describe the double significance of the Festival, and explain the names given to it in the Bible.

2. What does the Sukkah symbolize? What is its historical significance? What lesson does it teach to us of the present?

3. Explain the ceremony of the "four species" and its observance in olden times and in modern days.

4. What is the attitude of Judaism toward joy

and sorrow? How is this attitude exemplified by this Festival?

5. Draw a distinction between the joyousness of Jewish holidays and that of the festivals of other nations of antiquity.

6. What is the significance of Hosha'na Rabba? Give some details of its observance.

7. Describe the meaning of the closing days of the holiday, with special reference to the last day.

8. In what manner did children participate in the various ceremonies connected with this feast? What pedagogic value have they?

VI. NEW YEAR (ROSH HA-SHANAH)

The Solemn Days (Yomim Noraim).—The first ten days of the month of Tishri are designated in the liturgy as the Days of Repentance ('Aseret Yeme Teshubah). This period the Jew is enjoined to devote to solemn contemplation of his moral and religious condition, to pray for forgiveness for sins committed and to determine to improve his ways and sin no more. They are also called Solemn Days (Yomin Noraim), because of the solemn thoughts they suggest regarding man's weaknesses and failings and God's forgiveness and mercy. The first two days (Rosh ha-Shanah), and the tenth day (Yom Kippur), are holy days, when, as on other festivals, no servile work is permitted.

This period of repentance is preceded by an entire month of preparation. During the month af Elul, the Shofar is blown in the synagogue at every morning service of the week days and the pious recite additional prayers and supplications (Selihot), in anticipation of the day of judgment. There is an old tradition that Moses went up on Mt. Sinai for the third time on the first day of Elul and came down again on the tenth day of Tishri, with the assurance of God's pardon for the sin of the Golden Calf. In the hope that we also might obtain the same assurance on the Day of Atonement the pious Jews begin their preparations for the penitential season from the first of Elul. In many communities, the penitential prayers (Selihot) are recited only during the week preceding New Year, every day, early at dawn.

The Holy Days.—The two holy days, New Year and the Day of Atonement, have neither a historical nor an agricultural origin. They are purely religious in nature and appeal to the conscience of the individual Jew. While they do not partake of the joyousness that characterizes the three Pilgrim Feasts, they are, nevertheless, not meant to be observed as days of sadness and mourning. They, indeed, remind man of his frailty and weakness, but they also bring with them the grand and comforting message of the forgiveness of God. The great God, the Judge of the whole world, who sits in judgment over man's actions and thoughts, is also a kind and merciful Father, ready to forgive, to extend atonement to those who return to Him in truth. All manner of mourning is as strictly forbidden on these days as on the other festivals; the greeting that one extends to his neighbor is also the same (Yom Tob —a happy day); and in every other respect they are observed as holidays, festive though solemn, bringing up serious reflections, but also great and comforting hopes. Their appeal to the Jewish consciousness has ever been most powerful, so that even the least observant Israelite endeavors to keep these days holy, abstaining from his daily occupations and participating in the communal worship.

New Year (Rosh Ha-Shanah).—Although Nisan was the first month of the Jewish year (Exodus 12:2), the first day of the seventh month (Tishri) was, in many respects, regarded as the New Year. According to tradition, the creation of the world took place on the first of Tishri. Hence, Jewish chronology begins the year with this day. In the Bible, however, the festival is not designated as New Year, although the name is mentioned in the earliest

Rabbinical writings as a term in common use. The Bible speaks of the festival as "the day of blowing the horn" (Numbers 29:1), or as "the memorial of the blowing of the trumpet" (Leviticus 23:24). In the liturgy, the day is known simply as the day of "memorial" or as "the day of judgment." (Read the article "New Year" in the Jewish Encyclopedia.)

The Shofar.—The blowing of the Shofar during the morning services in the synagogue on the two days of Rosh ha-Shanah constitutes the most prominent feature in the observance of the holiday. The Shofar is usually made of the horn of a ram, although the horn of any other clean animal, except that of a cow or an ox (because of the Golden Calf incident), may also be used for that purpose. The horn is flattened after being softened in boiling water and is provided with a mouth-piece. It may not be painted in colors or decorated in any way, although it is permitted to have artistic designs carved on it.

Just before the scrolls are put back in the ark, the person selected for the task of blowing the Shofar (ba'al toke'a), dressed in white shroud and Talit, ascends the pulpit (bemah), accompanied by the Rabbi or another distinguished member of the congregation, who is designated as the "makri" (prompter), because he calls out the names of the sounds to the "ba'al toke'a." The congregation then joins in reciting, for seven times, Psalm 47, in which references are made to the use of the Shofar in connection with the declaration of God's sovereignty over the world. The ba'al toke'a then pronounces the following blessings:

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, our God, King of the Universe, Who has sanctified us with His command-

ments, and commanded us to hear the sound of the Shofar.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, our God, King of the Universe, Who has kept us alive, preserved us and enabled us to reach this season.

The sounds produced by the Shofar are: Teki'ah, the plain deep sound, ending abruptly; Shebarim, the broken sound; Teru'ah, a wavering sound, consisting of a number of broken notes. These sounds are arranged in various combinations, as follows:

Teki'ah, Shebarim, Teru'ah, Teki'ah
Teki'ah, Shebarim, Teki'ah
Teki'ah, Teru'ah, Teki'ah

and repeated three times, so that thirty sounds in all are sounded at this part of the service. The last Teki'ah is considerably prolonged, and is therefore called "Teki'ah Gedolah" (the great Teki'ah). The same thirty sounds are repeated later in the Musaf (additional) service. In some congregations, forty more sounds are produced at the end of the service, making in all one hundred sounds. The same order is followed also on the second day. The number of times the Shofar is sounded has been modified in some congregations in which the Rabbinical interpretations are not rigidly followed.

If the first day falls on a Sabbath, the Shofar is not sounded, the apprehension being that the ba'al toke'a will be tempted to carry the Shofar in the street, an act forbidden on the Sabbath Day. In Temple times, when strict discipline prevailed, the Shofar was blown also on the Sabbath.

The Meaning and the Message of the Shofar.—In Biblical times, important and solemn occasions were proclaimed by means of blowing the Shofar. The advent of the Sabbath, the festivals and the

New Moons (Numbers 10:10), and of the Jubilee Year (Leviticus 25:9) was heralded by the blowing of the trumpet. The great Revelation at Mt. Sinai is described as having been accompanied with the blast of the Shofar (Exodus 19:16, 19), which caused the frightened multitudes to withdraw in terror from the smoking mountain (Exodus 20:18). The prophets also speak of the blowing of the Shofar as a means of arousing the indifferent conscience and calling for humiliation and solemn contemplation (see Jeremiah 4:5, 19; 6:1, 17; Ezekiel 33:1-6; Joel 2:1, 15; Amos 3:6 and others).

The sounding of the Shofar on New Year's day is also intended to mark the solemnity of the occasion and to call for a searching examination of our deeds and conduct during the past year. The old year is gone, a new year is ushered in. Time advances, life is rapidly moving on. What use have we made of our time? How did we spend the life given to us? The notes produced by the Shofar make us interrupt our ordinary occupations and consider in how far we have failed to realize the best and noblest that is within us during the past year. Thus, this indeed becomes a Day of Memorial, because the Shofar reminds us of the real purpose of life, of its sacredness and sublimity and of our failure to realize that purpose, and also inspires us to resolve to make amends and improve our ways in the future.

Maimonides, the great Jewish philosopher, interpreted the warning sound of the Shofar in the following stirring words: "Awake, ye sleepers, and ponder your deeds; remember your Creator, and go back to Him in penitence. Be not of those that miss reality in their hunt after shadows, and waste their years in seeking after vain things which cannot

profit or deliver. Look well to your souls and consider your acts; forsake each of you his evil ways and thoughts, and return to God, so that He may have mercy upon you." (See Joseph, "Judaism as Creed and Life," pp. 190-192; Abrahams, "Festival Studies," ch. XX.)

There is also another idea involved in the name applied to this day as the "Day of Memorial." Not only should we bethink ourselves of our frailties and shortcomings, but we also pray that the sounds of the Shofar might be carried to God, Who would take account of our weakness and of our desire to return to Him, and judge us with mercy. Severe as we should be when we judge ourselves, we hope that God, the Great Judge, will be lenient when He judges us. With this idea in mind, we invoke His goodness by recalling the loyalty and self-sacrifice of our ancestors (Zekut Abot), so that even if we ourselves are unworthy of gracious consideration, God would have pity on us for the sake of the Patriarchs, for the sake of the many sacrifices made by our ancestors in behalf of His Holy Name. The sacrifice of Isaac, the most striking example of loyalty and implicit faith, is frequently referred to in the service of the day, not merely because it was supposed to have occurred on Rosh ha-Shanah, but especially because we hope to benefit by recalling this noble act on the part of our progenitor, Abraham. The reason why the Shofar is usually made out of the ram's horn is to emphasize this incident more strikingly, since it was the ram that was offered by Abraham instead of his son. The ready response of the Israelites at Mt. Sinai, when the Ten Commandments were offered to them, "we shall do, and we shall obey," displaying as it did the complete faith of the people in God, is also often men-

tioned in our prayers as a further reason why we might expect leniency in judgment. (See Rosenau, "Jewish Ceremonial Institutions and Customs," pp. 92-96; Jewish Encyclopedia, articles "Shofar," "New Year").

The Services in the Synagogue.—The liturgy for the New Year, while emphasizing these solemn thoughts, is not conducive to sadness and mourning. The certainty of God's mercy and kindness, the confidence in God's forgiveness of sins committed, carry with them a comforting hope, to which the prayers for the day give constant and noble expression. Not so much the smallness and weakness of man, as the greatness and power of God, is the theme of most of the prayers. There is a grand universalism, a glorious breadth of view permeating the most important portions of the Rosh ha-Shanah service, which make them the most sublime prayers in our liturgy. God, the King of the Universe, is first invoked to make all men realize His glory and His might, so that all may do His will, and all wickedness and sin may disappear from the earth. Even the prayers for the restoration of Palestine and the rebuilding of the holy city have in view not only Israel, but the whole human race. The glory of the Lord emanating from Zion will shed its lustre on the whole world, so that all creatures might behold the grandeur of the Creator and Ruler of the Universe. The righteous shall rejoice, when the dominion of arrogance shall pass away from the earth and the dominion of God be established instead.

Feeble though we are, and insignificant though our lives may seem, we are expected and enjoined so to order our lives as to be able to approach the

majestic glory of the divine. The religious soul, conscious of its unworthiness, still yearns for communion with the soul of the universe, with the great God. And this great Judge of our deeds and thoughts, this Mighty Ruler of the Universe, wants to sanctify our lives, and He provides us with the means by which we may come nearer to Him. The link that binds us with God is the Torah. God revealed Himself to our ancestors and gave them the Torah, the guide for conduct, by which human life might become holy and partake of the divine. These three ideas—the greatness and majesty of God, the sinfulness and weakness of man, and the means by which man can rise to the exalted destiny set before him, the adherence to the Torah—find most forcible expression in the Musaf (additional) service for the day. The three main elements of that service are designated as Malchuyot (in which the sovereignty of God over the Universe is declared), Zichronot (in which God's justice is brought out), and Shofarot (in which the Revelation at Mt. Sinai is recalled), and each of these ideas is supported by numerous quotations from the Bible and by references to various events in the early history of Israel. God the King; God the Judge; God the Lawgiver—these are really the three main principles of the Jewish religion (compare Isaiah 33:22).

The selection from Genesis 20 and 21, where the birth of Isaac and his contemplated sacrifice are narrated, form the sections of the Torah for the two days respectively. The Haftarah for the first day is taken from Samuel 1:1 to 2:10, because of the tradition that Samuel was born on Rosh ha-Shanah. This selection also includes the beautiful prayer of Hannah. On the second day, the Haftarah is taken

from Jeremiah 31:1-20, where the prophet emphasizes the great hope for Israel's restoration and for the Messianic period.

The usual greeting extended to one another on the festivals (Yom Tob—a happy day) is accompanied on Rosh ha-Shanah with the blessing "L'Shanah Tobah Tikateb—may you be inscribed for a happy year." Several additional prayers for life are interspersed in the regular service recited during the ten days of penitence (see Abrahams, "Festival Studies," ch. IV). During the evening meal of Rosh ha-Shanah it is customary to partake of some sweet fruit dipped in honey, and to pronounce the prayer, "May it be the will of God that we have a pleasant year." In more modern times this festival has been made the occasion of happy family reunions and of strengthening the ties of friendship and brotherhood. Greetings of good wishes are sent to relatives and friends from far and near and the family relationship and family affections are aroused and fostered by the exchange of gifts among relatives accompanied with blessings for a happy New Year. This custom, although of recent origin, is to be highly commended, because of the opportunity it affords to exercise those beautiful Jewish virtues clustering about the home and the family.

Based on the sentiment expressed in Micah 7:19, "He will again have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; and Thou will cast (we-Tashlik) all their sins into the depths of the sea," the custom arose of assembling in the afternoon of the first day of the New Year (or of the second day, if the first day is on the Sabbath) along the banks of a running water and reciting the verses from Micah 7:18-20 and some appropriate penitential prayers. This custom is still followed by a large number of

Jews (see Abrahams, "Festival Studies," ch. XIII).

The Sabbath between Rosh ha-Shanah and Yom Kippur is called "Sabbath Shubah" (The Sabbath of Repentance), because the Haftarah for the day is taken from Hosea 14:2-10, beginning with the word "Shubah" ("Return").

RÉSUMÉ

The penitential season brings a special message to the Jew of all times. It is well that a special season be set aside, during which our attention should be turned to our moral and religious progress, when we should, so to say, make an inventory of the status of our spiritual lives. "Return, O Israel, to the Lord thy God; for thou hast stumbled in thine iniquity" (Hosea 14:2) is the cry that rings in our ears day after day from the first to the tenth day of Tishri. And the pious Israelite heeds the cry and even long before that time begins to make an accounting with his soul, realizing that "there is not a righteous man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not" (Ecclesiastes 7:20).

While sin is thus regarded as incidental to human nature, and while we are all liable to stumble and yield to temptation, our religion extends to us the great hope of God's forgiveness, of His readiness to accept the repentant sinner, who returns to Him in truth. This is the comforting message of the two great holy days of the Jewish year. The repentant sinner will be received with favor by the Great Judge of the Universe. Aye, the position assigned to the penitent sinner in the affections of the All-Merciful is even higher than that occupied by the righteous, according to our Rabbis. He has to put

forth a greater effort to break with sinful habits and to continue along the path of righteous conduct, hence he is deserving of greater reward.

The sound of the Shofar recalls to us the greatness of God as well as the smallness of our lives. It bids us cease following the transient and ephemeral and to turn our thoughts to the lasting and eternal realities of life. Our higher responsibilities as the children of God, made in His own image, are made real to us and our hearts are broken in contrition over our failure to fulfill the great duties imposed upon us by the divine that is within us. We become frightened, terror-stricken, when we are made to contemplate how we have really spent the life which was entrusted to us for exalted and sacred ends, and we turn to God, our Father, for mercy and forgiveness. If we are unworthy of pardon, let our past record and the merit of our fathers, who have displayed such loyal faith and such noble self-sacrifice, plead in our behalf before the throne of Mercy.

Strong emphasis is given to these ideas in the beautiful and sublime prayers of the festival. From the humiliating thought of our insignificance and unworthiness, we turn to the consoling idea of God's greatness and majesty. If not for our sake, God will have mercy on us for the sake of His Holy Name. Not to us alone, but to the whole world, to all his creatures, God will manifest His glory and majesty. He will establish His kingdom upon earth, so that there will be no place for the rule of arrogance and sin.

"Israel, the Holy One, blessed be He, and the Torah are one," is a favorite saying of the Rabbis. Weak and frail though we are, a means was provided to us by which we can rise to the heights of perfection and holiness. The great and good God

SUKKOT IN THE SYNAGOGUE

(From the Painting by L. Pilichowski)

has revealed himself to our ancestors and told them what to do and how to regulate their lives so as to make them holy. The Torah is the link that binds Israel with God. Through the observance of its precepts our lives will become consecrated, partaking of the divine nature of God. It is therefore most appropriate that on these holy days we determine again to make the Torah our guide in life, and its precepts the norm of our actions and deeds.

Serious and sobering though these thoughts are, they are not saddening. We observe these days as festivals, because of the assurance that we have of the goodness of God and His readiness to forgive. It is this glorious idea that spurs us on to improve our ways and make ourselves worthy of God's care and benign Providence.

QUESTIONS

1. What is meant by the "Season of Repentance"? What preparations are made for it?

2. How do the Holy Days differ from the other three festivals of the Jewish calendar?

3. How is Rosh ha-Shanah designated in the Bible? How in the liturgy?

4. Describe the appearance of the Shofar and its use.

5. What significance was attached to the sound of the Shofar in the Bible? Illustrate by quotations.

6. What thoughts does the sound of the Shofar call forth on Rosh ha-Shanah?

7. Describe the meaning of "Zekut Abot" and its association with the idea of the Day of Judgment.

8. Explain, by quoting examples, the universalism of the Rosh ha-Shanah prayers.

9. Describe the three elements of the Musaf service and their significance.

10. Explain how it is that with all these serious reflections, Rosh ha-Shanah is still celebrated as a festival. What comforting thought does it bring? What is meant by "Tashlik"?

VII. THE DAY OF ATONEMENT (YOM HA-KIPPURIM)

The Purpose of the Day.—The Penitential Season, beginning on the first day of Tishri, reaches its culminating point on the tenth day of the same month, called the Day of Atonement. This is to be a "Sabbath of rest" and a fast day, when we should abstain from all ordinary occupations, restrain all physical cravings and devote all our thoughts to the higher call of the soul. "For on this day shall atonement be made for you, to cleanse you; from all your sins shall ye be clean before the Lord" (Leviticus 16:30). The forgiveness of God is conditioned on our determination to cleanse ourselves. This day is thus set aside for prayer and supplication, for making a supreme effort to throw off all sin, to wipe out all evil and to rise to the loftier dignity of the divinity that is within us.

"Teshubah" (return) is the appeal which this day makes to all Israelites. It is the call to turn away from the pettiness and smallness of our daily lives, from the sinfulness and negligence which characterize our actions, and to come back to a realization of the higher destiny assigned to the human soul, the real purpose of life. The consciousness of sin and of having strayed away from the path of righteousness breaks our hearts in contrition and remorse. Then we yearn for a purification of our souls which have become defiled by the sinful life, and for a reconciliation with our higher selves and with the Soul of the Universe, our Father in Heaven. And here comes the glorious promise of God, that He will

forgive us and cleanse us, that He is ready to take us back, when we "return" to Him in truth. We need no mediator who should intercede in our behalf. The humblest sinner may approach the divine throne, pour out his heart in prayer, confess his sins and resolve to make amends. To him God will listen and extend gracious pardon.

Nature of Repentance.—The confidence in God's mercy and forgiveness, which the day inspires, is conditioned upon man's repentance. The final aim of repentance should be "Teshubah," the return to the higher life, the reformation of our nature, the entire change of heart and of attitude towards life and its purpose. It is not merely the consciousness of sin, nor even the remorse that this consciousness brings with it, although it includes both. It aims higher. It goes to the very root of the evil and proposes a radical change in the very nature of man, so as to make sin repugnant and all evil a menace to the well-being of the individual and of the community.

The first stage in true repentance is naturally the feeling that a sin has been committed, an act that should bring shame to the individual guilty of it. We must feel thoroughly ashamed of our evil-doings and have the courage to acknowledge them before we seek repentance. The Confession of sins thus forms a very important part in the liturgy of the Day of Atonement. The next step is to make reparation for the sin. If we become conscious of a sin committed against a fellow-man, we should proceed to seek his pardon, and, whenever possible, atone for it to him. In agreement with this idea, it is customary in some synagogues to provide refreshments for the worshippers on the morning of the eve of

the Day of Atonement, when forgiveness is extended to one another for any possible slight or harm. But even after we have obtained this pardon and made the necessary reparation, there is still the sin of disobedience against God's law which requires atonement. Every sin against our neighbor involves also a sin of disobedience against God. The child who does harm to his brother or sister against the order of his parents, has the double sin to atone for —the sin against his brother or sister, and the sin of disobedience to his parents. One can elaborate still further in the explanation of this idea by concrete examples from child life.

The most important step in the process of repentance, however, is the last one leading to resolutions not to sin again. True repentance, implying, as it does, sincere regret for past actions, must culminate in the whole-hearted desire to avoid all sin in the future and in the determination to withstand temptation and conquer all evil inclinations. Nor should such a resolution end here. It must also extend to the determination not only to avoid the evil, but also to seek the good and follow it. To do the good, that is, to observe the positive laws of religion and morality, is to live in harmony with our better selves. It also has the power of preventing the repetition of evil. The reformation must be a radical one. It must enter our hearts and change our attitude toward the very purpose of life and its duties.

Fasting, Prayer, Charity.—The "affliction of the soul" commanded on this day is interpreted to consist in abstaining from food and drink and other physical pleasures. This is not to be regarded merely as a self-imposed punishment for sins com-

mitted, but chiefly as an effort to get away from the grosser things of life to the more exalted and spiritual. By refusing to satisfy the ordinary cravings of the body, we, in the phraseology of the Rabbis, rise to the position of angels, divested, for the time being, of the coarse and carnal and filled with thoughts of the divine and the eternal. Fasting also helps to crush our pride, to bring us to contrition and to humble us before God. We should become spiritually stronger through the consciousness of physical weakness. It emphasizes the great truth that "man doth not live by bread alone, but by everything that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live" (Deuteronomy 8:3).

The feelings and emotions which well up within the human breast on this day find adequate expression in the beautiful prayers of the liturgy of the day. These prayers are a reflex of what the Jewish soul, throughout the ages, experienced on this most sacred day of the year. Adoration and supplication, confession of guilt and cheering comfort in the hope of a greater glory still to come—all these form the themes for poet and hymnologist, chronicler and exegete, who unite in their contributions to the services of the day. The whole day is spent in the synagogue in devotion and religious exercise. We feel most strongly the nearness of God, and we pour out out hearts to him, just as the confiding child does before his loving father. The Shekinah (God's Presence), the Rabbis say, is then very near the habitations of man, is willing to listen to our prayers and is desirous for a reconciliation with the wayward and sinful. Just as fasting is symbolically regarded the offering up of one's fat and blood on the altar of God, so is prayer to take the place of the sacrifices in the Temple. The solemnity of the occasion, the

strong and vivid interpretation which these prayers present of what every Jewish heart must on this day feel, cannot fail to produce a spiritual effect on the human soul.

Charity, "more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifices" (comp. Proverbs 21:3), is regarded as the third element necessary to obtain God's favor in "removing the evil decree." Benevolence is the feeling of dependence on God, which should be predominant in the mind on this day, translated into action. Fasting accentuates the equality of all men, subject to the same physical needs and weaknesses. Prayer brings out the equality of all men in the sight of God, possessed of the same soul divine and regarded by Him with the same loving care and solicitude. The offerings for charitable purposes on this holy day, customary in all synagogues, are thus the outward expression of the sentiment that all men are brothers, children of one good and kind Father. In Isaiah 58, the chapter selected as the Haftarah for the morning service of the day, the real purpose of the fast is strikingly emphasized: "Is not this (rather) the fast that I have chosen? To loose the fetters of wickedness, to undo the bands of the yoke, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" (Isaiah 58:6-7.)

The Services of the Day.—In Temple times, the Day of Atonement was celebrated with a most imposing sacrificial service. The whole service was performed by the High Priest, who alone, and only on this day, entered the Holy of Holies, there offer-

ing up incense. In the presence of a large congregation, assembled in the courts of the Temple, the High Priest confessed first his own sins and the sins of his household, then the sins of the priests and finally the sins of the whole house of Israel. The exact wording of this impressive confession is still retained and reproduced with great solemnity during the additional service (Musaf) of the day.

With the destruction of the Temple, the sacrificial system was abandoned and prayer was substituted. A custom suggestive of the sacrificial cult is still retained in many Jewish homes in the Kapparot ceremony. This consists of the swinging over one's head, on the evening preceding the Atonement day, a fowl, usually a hen or a rooster, and pronouncing a formula by which the fowl is made to suffer the death penalty that should have been inflicted upon the person performing the act. In spite of the great opposition to this custom by many Rabbis, on the ground of its resemblance to a sacrifice, the offering of which is strictly prohibited since the destruction of the Temple, the custom still survives and is observed by many Jews in all parts of the world. Many substitute a sum of money for the fowl, and this money is then given to charity. (See Jewish Encyclopedia, s. v. Kapparot.)

Five distinct services are read on the Day of Atonement: The Evening Services ('Arbit), also called "Kol Nidre," because the opening section of the service begins with these words; the Morning Service (Shaharit); the Additional Service (Musaf); the Afternoon Service (Minhah), and the Closing Service (Ne'ilah). The most characteristic feature of all of these services is the confession of sins. The form of confession is in the plural, and is designed as a communal prayer, so that even though there are

in the long lists of transgressions some of which the individual reciting the confession may not feel himself guilty, he expresses the regret that he was unable to prevent others from committing the recited transgressions. "All Israelites are responsible for one another's actions" is the Rabbinic dictum, supported also by the world's verdict. Hence, we grieve not only for the sins which we ourselves have committed, but also for those which we did not prevent others from committing.

The regular evening service is preceded by the section beginning with the words "Kol Nidre," which is a formal annulment of all vows that one may make in the heat of passion, when overwhelmed by a great grief or a great joy. No vows which imply a promise to a fellow-man are thereby rescinded. The annulment was instituted merely as a guard against such vows as might remain unfulfilled through negligence or forgetfulness. It may also have obtained an additional meaning when many Jews, especially in Spain, were compelled to profess Christianity in the open and renounce their Judaism. Thus, the declaration is preceded by the permission, announced by two prominent men of the congregation, together with the reader, to include the transgressors in the community of worshippers. Because this is recited at the very beginning of the service (before sunset), and because of its plaintive and touching melody, the "Kol Nidre" has assumed great importance in the liturgy. In many synagogues two learned men, with scrolls in their arms, are stationed on either side of the Reader, who repeats the formula three times, while the congregation is standing. This is followed by the regular evening service, after which a number of penitential hymns and prayers are recited.

In spite of the constant emphasis laid by the Rabbis on the fact that this formula refers only to oaths in which the interest of another party is not involved, the wording of the "Kol Nidre" has frequently given rise to serious accusations against the trustworthiness of an oath taken by a Jew. The enemies of the Jews pointed to this formula as an argument against accepting the testimony given by a Jew in a court of justice under oath. This resulted in a degrading law passed in several states which compelled Jews to take a special oath, called the Jews' Oath (More Judaico), which continued in force until very recently. In view of the misconstruction to which this formula is open, the "Kol Nidre" has been removed from the service in Reform synagogues, although its melody has been retained. (See Jewish Encyclopedia, s. v. Kol Nidre.)

The regular morning service is also interspersed with a number of hymns and supplications. It is concluded with the reading from the Torah of Leviticus 16, where the order of the sacrificial service of the day is given. The Haftarah is most appropriately taken from Isaiah 57: 14-58: 14, where the real purpose of the fast day is described. This is followed by the Memorial service for the dead, when offerings are made in their memory. The custom of lighting large candles in the synagogue or at home, which should burn for twenty-four hours, is also associated with the memory of the dead, and is symbolic of the belief in the immortality of the soul (comp. Proverbs 20: 27: "The spirit of man is the lamp of the Lord"). In the Portuguese synagogues the memorial service for the dead is recited in the evening, while the synagogues using the Union Prayer Book hold this service immediately before the concluding service of the day (Neilah).

During the Musaf, or additional service, that stirring picture of the judgment of God, contained in the hymn beginning with the words "U'Netaneh Tokef," which is recited on the New Year, is repeated. The most characteristic part of the Musaf service is the narrative of the Temple ritual of the day ('Abodah). This is vividly depicted by the poet in a series of narrative hymns, interwoven with the selections from the Mishnah, where the actual words of the High Priest are reproduced. When the High Priest made his confession, he pronounced the full name of God (the Tetragrammaton), and the people, on hearing it, prostrated themselves. While the reader at present does not pronounce this name, the custom of prostrating themselves when this passage is read is still followed by observant Jews (Kor'im —bending the knee). The lengthy narrative of the 'Abodah is followed by a series of dirges, in which the poet bewails the fact that this is now but a memory, and that the glory of the imposing service has departed from Israel with the destruction of the Temple and with the exile of the Jews from their land.

The Minhah service begins with the reading from the Torah of Leviticus 18, the section on forbidden marriages. The book of Jonah is read as the Haftarah, because in this book the effect of true repentance is strikingly illustrated, showing that God is ready to forgive the repentant sinner, whether he be Jew or Gentile.

The concluding service of the day, Ne'ilah, is invested with special solemnity and impressiveness. The word "Ne'ilah" means "closing," and may have originally referred to the closing of the Temple gates at the end of the Day of Atonement, when certain prayers were recited. It has, however, in

the course of time, become associated with the closing of the gates of Heaven, when the fates of all men, inscribed on Rosh ha-Shanah, were finally sealed. Hence, in the prayers, all the expressions "inscribe us for life" used during the ten penitential days, are changed during Ne'ilah to "seal us for life." The ark is kept open during the whole service, which is usually read by the Rabbi or another pious and learned member of the congregation, and every worshipper then makes a supreme effort for reconciliation with God. The service concludes with the opening sentence of the Shema', recited by the reader and the congregation, the sentence, "Praised be the name of His glorious Kingdom forever and ever," repeated in unison three times, and the phrase, "The Lord, He is God" (I Kings, 18:39), repeated in unison seven times. Finally the Shofar is blown to announce the conclusion of the day.

Fast and Feast Day.—Though inducing sober thoughts and solemn contemplations, the Day of Atonement is still to be observed as a festival. No manner of mourning is permitted. One should abstain from food and drink, from bathing and anointing, but one is not permitted to inflict upon oneself any unnecessary punishments. Although the wearing of leather shoes is forbidden, the other garments worn should be of the finest one can afford. The white shroud worn by the men in the synagogue is not to be a reminder of death, as some believe, but it rather symbolizes purity and festivity. Women also wear white garments on this day for the same reason. The day should be regarded as a special boon from God, when an opportunity is afforded man to cleanse himself of the sordidness of sin, and when God's mercy, rather than His justice, prevails,

and when Satan, the Arch Accuser of Israel, is not permitted to enter the presence of the Most High.

In Temple times, it is said, the day was observed with much rejoicing, especially after the High Priest came out of the Holy of Holies and the services were concluded without a mishap. The assembled multitudes, confident that their sins had been forgiven, surrounded him with their congratulations and the nobles escorted him home, amidst much rejoicing. The young people indulged in dancing and merry-making, and the joy that comes from the implicit faith in the mercy of God prevailed everywhere.

(Read Jewish Encyclopedia, articles Atonement; Day of Atonement; Kol Nidre; Kapparot; Confession of Sins; Abrahams, "Festival Studies," chapters V and XIV; Joseph, "Judaism as Creed and Life," pp. 194-208.)

RÉSUMÉ

While the ideal of human life is to be always pure and spotless, shunning evil and doing good (comp. Ecclesiastes 9:8; read the beautiful paraphrase of the Talmudic interpretation of this in Lucas, "Talmudic Legends," p. 19, "The King's Banquet"), Judaism is practical enough to recognize the human frailty and weakness which prevents man from living up to this grand ideal. The institution of the Day of Atonement is an admission of the frailty of human nature and of the naturalness of sin, against which man must conduct a continuous struggle. The periodic self-examination and introspection help to recall man from his evil inclinations to the realization of his better nature. Thus, it is of incalculable value in maintaining the high stand-

ard of life. In a greater degree than the weekly Sabbath, the annual Day of Atonement helps to accentuate the sacredness of human life and the duty of the individual to maintain it in a state of holiness.

The comforting message of Judaism is that God's sympathy is with the sinner who makes a sincere effort to free himself from the sordidness of the sinful life. God is ready to meet man half way if man makes an honest endeavor to rise to God. Heart-broken over his wickedness, candidly confessing his guilt, and sincerely determining to make reparation and amendment, the humblest sinner may confidently expect God's mercy and forgiveness.

"Fasting, Prayer and Charity remove the evil decree." By suppressing our physical cravings we become humble and contrite and are able to apprehend more clearly our spiritual nature. The emotions of contrition and remorse find ample expression in the glorious prayers of the day. These both suggest and give expression to the ideas that should permeate us on this day. Benevolence and charity towards those who are less fortunate than we are, bring out still further the idea of the common brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of God. Charity emphasizes the positive side of true repentance. The determination to abstain from evil must be supplemented by the resolution to do good in order to have a positive and lasting effect on the soul. The constant doing of good is in itself a preventative against the allurements of evil.

The services of the day are arranged so as to bring out in greater relief the idea of repentance and of God's forgiving nature. Like wayward children who have strayed from the path laid down for them by a loving parent, we come before the throne of God, full of remorse, confessing our guilt and beg-

ging for pardon, for life and for moral strength. Confident of His sympathy and kindness, we are at the same time also conscious of our unworthiness of His pardon.

The glorious service of the day in Temple times is sadly recalled, but the hope for the greater future awaiting Israel is also strongly emphasized.

Confident of the forgiveness and trustful of the mercy of God, the Jew celebrates the Day of Atonement as a festival, solemn but hope-inspiring. Sin is the result of human weakness. Man must and can overcome it. God is near, awaiting the efforts of man to strive against the allurements of sin. He is ready to help him in his struggle, if he only puts forth an honest effort to lead the higher life. This is indeed a cheering message that the day brings to all men. Not a relentless judge, but our own loving Father, sits in judgment over our actions and thoughts. In the words of Rabbi Akiba: "Happy art thou, O Israel! Before whom art thou being purified and who purifieth thee? Thy Father, who is in Heaven."

QUESTIONS

1. What is the purpose of the Day of Atonement? Define the word "Teshubah."

2. Describe fully the various stages in repentance.

3. In what way does a sin toward a fellow-man constitute also a sin against God? Illustrate.

4. What is the purpose of fasting?

5. What part is assumed by charity in the work of repentance?

6. In what ceremony does the desire for sacrificial atonement still survive?

7. Mention the five services of the day and the characteristic features of each.

8. Why is the form of the Confession of Sins in the plural number?

9. Relate briefly the contents of the book of Jonah, showing the appropriateness of reading this book on the Day of Atonement.

10. Explain the festive character of the day in olden times and at the present time.

VIII. THE MINOR FESTIVALS

The Minor Festivals.—Besides the festivals enumerated in the Pentateuch, there are also several other days in the Jewish calendar which commemorate some happy events in the history of the nation and are observed as holidays. These were instituted by later authorities and were accepted by the great body of Israel. They do not partake of the sanctity of the feasts mentioned in the Torah. Therefore, all manner of work is permitted on these days. They are marked, however, by peculiar ceremonies observed in the synagogue and in the home, distinguishing them from the other days of the year. Chief among these are the festivals of Hanukkah and Purim.

Hanukkah.—The festival of Hanukkah is celebrated for eight days, beginning with the 25th day of Kislev. It commemorates the victory of the Maccabean heroes over the Syrian army, in the year 165 B. C. E.

Although the festival has no Biblical origin, having been instituted by the early Rabbis, it has been affectionately cherished by the Jewish people throughout all these centuries, because of the glorious memories it calls forth. These memories fill us with a justifiable pride at the achievements of our heroes and martyrs, who fought valiantly for the glory of God and for their religious freedom. Because the war was primarily a religious war, in which freedom of conscience was involved, and in which the political aspect was only of secondary im-

portance, its commemoration has made such a strong appeal to the Jewish consciousness. Our early history has preserved the records of greater victories, fraught with much greater political consequences than the victory of the Maccabees. But we do not celebrate the victories of Joshua, David or the other successful warriors and generals. In the Maccabean war, the Jewish religion was at stake. This war was more of a struggle between Judaism and Hellenism than between Jews and Syrians. And while we admire the prowess of the great warriors, their indomitable courage in face of almost insurmountable difficulties, we admire them more for their religious zeal and enthusiasm. We are grateful to them for saving the Jewish state from foreign invasions, but we are more grateful to them for saving Judaism from pollution and possible extinction.

Presentation of the Story.—In presenting the story of Hanukkah as part of a lesson in religion, the teacher may omit many of the details which would be necessarily included when the same lesson is taught as part of the history. (See Course VII. A. Lesson 5, The Maccabees.) The prevalent conditions of the time, the various influences operating in Jewry and the importance of these events to the future development of Judaism, however, must be given with clearness and precision. The teacher should endeavor especially to find the point of contact in the part of history already covered by the class, even though he may find it necessary to pass over several centuries, with the barest outlines. For instance, if the children in the class have not gone further in their Bible history than the period of the Kings, the teacher should begin there, satisfy-

ing himself with a mere reference to the destruction of the Jewish state, the exile of the Jews to Babylon, their restoration under the Persian rule, the rebuilding of the Temple under Ezra and Nehemiah, and the passing of the Jewish state from Persian to Greek rule with the conquest of Persia by Alexander the Great, the point from which the story should be given in greater detail. The approximate dates of these various events should be mentioned, so that the child's perspective may not become confused, and the background be definitely and clearly set.

It is not necessary to give here the story in detail, since this can be found in the two Books of the Maccabees, in Josephus' Antiquities, or in any other Jewish history of more modern days. A few points, however, requiring emphasis and elaboration, will be treated here.

Judaism and Hellenism.—With the conquest of Persia by Alexander the Great, in 332 B. C. E., the Jews came under the Greek rule. The rule at first was not oppressive to the Jews and the change was hardly perceptible. Whether subject to Egypt or Syria, the Jews were allowed to maintain much of their independence in internal affairs and were but little interfered with in their religious or political life. It was only after Antiochus Epiphanes became King of Syria (175 B. C. E.) that the Jews began to feel the yoke of the oppressor.

The contact between Jew and Greek, however, exerted a baneful effect upon the Jews, spiritually and morally. The Greeks, although a pagan people, were the exponents of the highest culture in antiquity. They contributed much to the intellectual and artistic wealth of the human race. Their philos-

ophers and thinkers, their poets and sculptors, are studied and admired to the present day. It was but natural, therefore, that the Jews should be attracted by such a people and desire to imitate them and their culture. The Greeks, however, entertained entirely different views about life and its purpose than those held by the Jewish people. Their standards of morality were different. Their conception of duty and their manner of life varied greatly from those of the Jews. Many of the Greeks regarded pleasure as the sole aim in life and indulged in all kinds of excesses, which shocked the finer sensibilities of the pious Jew. Others worshipped physical beauty and gave themselves up to the development of the body, by means of gymnastics and exercises of all kinds. These practices were brought to Judea by the Greek soldiers and rulers, and soon found many adherents among the Jews, especially the more wealthy classes, who wished to imitate the Greeks, the rulers of the land. These imitators called themselves Hellenists, i.e., followers of Greek culture, which to many of them meant only the exchange of the righteous rules of the moral life enjoined by Judaism for the more easy-going and the more convenient mode of life followed by the pleasure-loving Greeks. The young especially were attracted to this new life. They assumed Greek names, followed diligently all the practices of the Greeks, and became Greeks in every way, except in that they refused to worship the Greek gods.

The consequence of this change, which was widespread in Judea, might have meant the overthrow of all the exalted conceptions of religion and morality which Judaism teaches. There was, indeed, a small band of Jews who opposed this influence with all their energies and fought against it with might

and main. These opponents were known as the Hasidim (pious ones). But they would have been powerless in face of this mighty onslaught had it not been for a combination of circumstances, by which Providence does its work in the world, which saved Judaism from destruction and which rescued its noble ideals and teachings for posterity.

The Struggle.—Antiochus Epiphanes was thirsting for power, and an opportunity to display his tyranny presented itself in the conditions prevailing in the small vassal state of Judea. The weakening of the religious and moral bonds, through the influence of Greek practices and ideas, was the cause of many quarrels and dissensions in Jerusalem. The Highpriesthood, the most exalted office in the Jewish commonwealth, was degraded into a political office, which the Greek authorities awarded to the highest bidder. Jewish High Priests appointed by the Greeks were, as a rule, unworthy men, devoid of all religious feeling and even disloyal to the national ideals of the people, whom they were supposed to represent. The people looked upon them as usurpers and refused to submit to their authority. In consequence of one of these rivalries for the office, Antiochus was called in to restore peace. This was the pretext for which he was waiting. It gave him the opportunity to interfere in the internal affairs of the nation and to display his power. His desire was "that all should be one people and that every one should obey his laws." He, therefore, issued decrees prohibiting the Jews from observing the Sabbaths and holidays, and compelled them to offer sacrifices to the Greek gods, for whom altars were erected in every city of Judea. By forcing them to abandon their religion and their worship and follow

the pagan practice of the Greeks, he expected to effect a thorough assimilation of the two peoples. Some Jews yielded to the cruel demands of the tyrant, either because they were too cowardly to resist them or because they were in entire accord with the king's aims and policies. Many Jews, however, stoutly refused to follow the Greek worship, even though such refusal meant death. They willingly suffered martyrdom rather than give up their cherished faith and practices. (In this connection the teacher may relate the legends of the Hasidim hiding in caves for the purpose of observing their religious ceremonies, of Hannah and her seven sons, and other examples of heroism on the part of the steadfast and pious of the nation. See books referred to above and articles in Jewish Encyclopedia.)

Foremost among these pious ones were Mattathias and his sons. They would not submit to the royal decrees, nor would they tacitly accept the fate of the martyr. Possessed of a strong faith in the righteousness of their cause, and in their own abilities to defend that cause, and placing their trust in God, they raised the flag of rebellion in the small town of Modin, determined to fight for their rights and, if necessary, to die fighting for them. These noble heroes soon attracted a number of loyal and zealous men, who were inspired with a similar great hope, which only implicit faith in God and in themselves could give. They might have submitted to infringements on their political rights, as many of their ancestors and more of their descendants have done. But when their religion was assailed, when that which was more precious to them than life itself was in danger of destruction, these meek Hasidim suddenly turned into great warriors and heroes, and

their deficiencies in military skill and training were fully compensated for by their zeal and courage, which made them a worthy match for the well-trained Greek legions.

The Maccabees.—Mattathias did not live to see the realization of his great hope. His work, however was worthily carried on by his five sons, chief among whom was Judah Maccabee (probably from a word meaning "a hammer"—an appropriate appellation. Some derive this word from the legend concerning the motto, supposed to have been inscribed on their banner, "Mi Kamoka Ba-Elim Adonai," "Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the mighty?" Exodus 15:11, the first letters of which make the word MKBI). With a small band of followers, Judah succeeded in breaking the strength of the Greek armies, which Antiochus kept pouring into the country, won battle after battle and finally gained possession of Jerusalem. The Temple, however, was polluted by the abominable worship of the Greek gods, and it was necessary to cleanse its premises and re-dedicate it anew to the service of the God of Israel. The ceremony of consecration took place on the 25th day of Kislev, in the year 165 B. C. E., and the festivities lasted for eight days. In commemoration of this great event, the festival of Hanukkah (Dedication) was instituted to be celebrated for eight days, beginning on the day when the Temple was re-dedicated by the Maccabees.

These heroes, who struggled against almost insurmountable odds and gained their victory purely by dint of their great moral courage and devotion to the highest ideals of the human mind, have always stood out in Jewish history as the most powerful representatives of the type of heroes that the Jew admires

most. Their work and their achievements are the concrete symbols of the hand of God in Jewish history, of the protection He always vouchsafed to His people, when they put their trust in Him. The courage and valor displayed by the Maccabean heroes may indeed be admired by all men, but the motives that prompted the great courage, the sentiments which imbued them with that glorious faith that led them to victory, can best be appreciated by the Jew, who suffered so much for his religious convictions. Thus, while not invested with the importance attached to the Biblical feasts, Hanukkah always appealed to the Jew with great force, and the memories awakened by its observance quickened his pulse and strengthened his faith in himself and in his God. We are grateful to the Maccabean heroes, not so much for saving the Jews, as for saving Judaism; not so much for gaining political freedom for the Jewish people, as for restoring the Jewish religion and Jewish ideals to their pristine beauty and holiness. The blow they dealt to Hellenism was of more consequence to the Jews, and even to the world at large, than the blow they dealt to the army of Antiochus.

The Manner of Observance.—The most distinctive ceremony of the Hanukkah festival is the lighting of the Hanukkah lights in the home and in the synagogue. A beautiful legend is related in explanation of this ceremony and of the custom of observing the holiday for eight days. When the Temple was re-dedicated by Judah Maccabee, the Rabbis relate, and the perpetual lamp was to be lighted, there was found only one small flask of oil which had remained undefiled by the idolatrous enemy. This contained sufficient oil to last only for one

night, but by a miracle, it lasted for eight days, until fresh oil could be procured. Hence, the custom was established of celebrating the festival for eight days, by means of illumination. On the first evening, one light is lit, and on every succeeding evening an additional light is burned, until the eighth day, when eight lights are lighted. While the candles are burning, it is customary not to do any work. Children are permitted to indulge in games during that time, and in consequence of this some peculiar games have grown up among the Jews of the Middle Ages. (See Jewish Encyclopedia, articles: Hanukkah, Gambling; also Abrahams' "Festival Studies," ch. XXI; Rosenau, "Jewish Ceremonial Institutions and Customs," pp. 127-130.) The lighting of the Hanukkah lights is preceded by two benedictions, the first referring to the commandment itself and the second referring to the miracles performed at the time of the wars. On the first night, a third blessing, Sheheheyanu, is added. (See Prayer Book.) After the blessings are pronounced the very popular hymn Ma'oz Zur is chanted.

The Hallel (Psalms 113-118) is recited every day of the feast during the service in the synagogue. A special prayer, commemorative of the occasion, is inserted in the Amidah (The Eighteen Benedictions), and also in the Grace after meals. The reading of the Torah is taken from Numbers 7, the appropriate verses for each day. This selection deals with the dedication of the altar in the wilderness and was, therefore, regarded appropriate for the festival of Dedication.

Purim.—The Feast of Purim (literally Lots), observed on the 14th day of Adar, is of Biblical origin, having its rise in the events narrated in the Book of

Esther. These events are said to have occurred when the Jews lived in a foreign land, removed from their native soil. In Persia, the Jews fared well and enjoyed many privileges, so that many of them regarded their position there quite secure. It was, therefore, a rude awakening for them to find that the whim of an underling, an upstart who was thirsty for power and glory, might in one moment bring about their utter destruction. Haman, the chief minister of King Ahasuerus of Persia, decided to exterminate all the Jews of the kingdom, because one Jew offended his dignity. His plea with the king was based on the ground that the Jews were a people separate from other peoples and unlike all other peoples, and "it is no profit for the king to tolerate them." How familiar that accusation sounds! Mordecai, the immediate cause of provocation to the haughty Haman, because he would pay divine homage to no man, was also the cause of deliverance. His appeal to Queen Esther to intercede in behalf of her people, even though her own life be endangered thereby, breathes the highest faith in God and the most exalted loyalty to Judaism. The day set by Haman, as most favorable for the destruction of the Jews, is observed as a fast day, while the following day is kept as a day of joy and thanksgiving in commemoration of the great deliverance.

The Festival of Purim has been a powerful lesson to the Jews in exile. It taught them not to rely on the good-will extended to them by the rulers of any land, nor to despair when dangers were most threatening and persecutions most cruel. "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. * * * Happy is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God" (Psalms 146:3, 5). The story

of Purim has been repeated many times in Jewish history, in one form or another. Noble-minded rulers, who allowed the Jews freedom and equality, were frequently influenced by matters of policy or by the machinations of zealots or wily schemers to seek the destruction of our ancestors. In such times the lessons gained from the story of Purim helped them in their attitude, both toward the good and the subsequent evils. They learned to rely only on God, who is the Source of all comfort and protection.

Manner of Observance.—The Book of Esther (Megillah "scroll") is read in the synagogue both at the evening and morning services, preceded by three blessings, one referring to the commandment itself, the second to the miracles performed at the time in behalf of the Jews, and the third, Shehe-heyanu, in gratitude that we are permitted to celebrate the occasion. The story of the Book of Esther, containing a number of dramatic elements, was early in Jewish history adopted for dramatic presentation. It was customary for groups of amateur actors to go from house to house and present this story to the great delight of the children. Many such versions have come down to us from the Middle Ages. In more modern days, this is done in the various religious schools and the parts are taken by the children themselves. (See Abrahams' "Festival Studies," Chs. VI, XVIII, XIX; "Jewish Life in the Middle Ages," Ch. XIV.)

The exchange of gifts between friends and the sending of presents to the poor on the day of Purim is expressly enjoined in the Book of Esther (9:22). This beautiful custom, through which the social sentiments find a noble expression, is worthy of pres-

ervation. In olden times, it was customary to entrust this duty to the children, who were the bearers of gifts from friend to friend and carried the packages to the poor. The pleasure thus afforded the child of being the messenger of cheer and joy was indeed very great.

Joy and happiness is the keynote of this festival. For the principal meal, begun in the afternoon and lasting until late in the evening (Seudah), the Jewish housewife was wont to prepare the best and finest that her culinary skill could invent. Indulgence in drink was not discouraged at this meal and various entertainments were provided to delight the hearts of young and old.

The fifteenth of Adar is designated as Shushan Purim because the people of Shushan observed Purim on that day (Esther 9:18), and it is kept as a semi-holiday.

Other Memorable Days.—The thirty-third day of Sefirah (Lag ba-'Omer), corresponding to the eighteenth day of Iyar, is called "Scholars' Feast," because the legend has it that a plague that raged among the many disciples of Rabbi Akiba (135 C. E.) was checked on this day.

The three days preceding the Feast of Weeks (Shabuot) are designated as the "Three Days of Separation" (Sheloshet Yeme Hagbalah), in commemoration of the order given to the children of Israel to sanctify themselves before the Revelation (Exodus 19: 10-12).

The fifteenth day of Ab is observed as a semi-festival, for various reasons, one of which is that it commemorates the date when the Benjamites were reconciled with the other Israelites (Judges 21). The Mishnah preserves a tradition of the joyousness

that marked the celebration of the day, the chief feature being the dances in which the daughters of Jerusalem, both rich and poor, took part.

The fifteenth day of Shebat is observed as the "New Year for Trees." It is customary to eat different kinds of fruit on that day, especially such as grow in Palestine, as figs, dates, pomegranates, or carobs.

RÉSUMÉ

The Minor Feasts are of great value in maintaining and fostering the Jewish historic consciousness. They stimulate a pride in the Jewish past and strengthen the loyalty to Jewish traditions. Hanukkah, perhaps more than any other of the Jewish feasts, helps to strengthen that bond of union with the past of Israel, and its memories make a special appeal to the young, whose imagination is fired by the glowing achievements of the heroes and martyrs of that great war.

In presenting the lesson on Hanukkah, the teacher might begin by narrating the events which the festival commemorates, as indicated above. Another method might be followed to advantage, especially when the class is not sufficiently advanced in history. The point of contact might be found in the observance of the festival, which might form the starting point, and the story might then be presented in explanation of the ceremonies, many of which are probably familiar to all Jewish children. The same method may be pursued in presenting the lesson on Purim, or any other festival.

The point of emphasis in the story of Hanukkah should be the fact that this was a war for principle and conviction and not for glory and power. The consequences of the war on the future development

of Judaism, in so far as it weakened the growing influence of Hellenism, should also be brought out prominently.

In the lesson on Purim, the emphasis should be laid on the entire dependence of Israel on God's protection and guidance. Prosperity and freedom should not make us forget our duties to God and to our religion; adversity and persecution should not make us despair of God's favors and protection. The story of Purim was regarded by the Jews of the Middle Ages as symbolic of their condition and fate in the various lands where Jews resided. Jewish history records a number of Purims observed in various communities to commemorate the escape from the evil plots of rulers and princes against Israel. Haman became a generic name in Jewish history by which the ever recurring antisemite was designated. (See Jewish Encyclopedia, article Purim.)

The quaint ceremonies and observances of these days should be fully explained. They are exceedingly interesting in themselves, and many of them may easily be adapted in modern days to the advantage of Judaism and the Jewish people.

THE MINOR FASTS

Minor Fasts.—The only fast day in the Jewish calendar, enjoined in the Torah, is the Day of Atonement. The fasting on this day, as has been pointed out (see Chapter VII), is purely for religious reasons, having as its object the effort to remove oneself from the material and the worldly and approach the spiritual and the divine. Hence, although the "soul is afflicted," the day is still observed as a holiday when no sadness or mourning

is permitted. It is intended mainly for individual introspection, for a reckoning between man and his conscience, between man and his God.

There are, however, several other fast days in the Jewish calendar which are of an entirely different origin and serve also a different purpose. They commemorate some sad events in the history of the Jewish people, and therefore tend towards strengthening the historic consciousness of the Jew, the bond of union that unites Israel with his past. The fasting on these days serves to recall the calamities which befell the nation and to make the present generation, as it were, participants in those misfortunes. They are national days of mourning, mostly centering around the events surrounding the destruction of the Jewish State, the greatest misfortune that befell Israel.

These are: The Fast of Tebet (Tebet 10) commemorating the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem under Nebuchadnezzar (II Kings 25:1; Jeremiah 52:4); the Fast of Tammuz (Tammuz 17), commemorating the breach made in the wall of Jerusalem (II Kings 25:3, 4; Jeremiah 52:6, 7; the ninth is mentioned there, but because during the war with the Romans, the breach in the wall was made on the seventeenth, that day is observed as the fast day); the Fast of Ab (Ab 9), commemorating the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple (II Kings 25:8, 9; Jeremiah 52:12, 13; although other dates are given there, Rabbinic tradition has it that both the first and the second Temple were set on fire on the ninth, toward evening, and continued burning through the tenth); the Fast of Gedaliah (Tishri 3), the anniversary of the assassination of Gedaliah, the prince whom Nebuchadnezzar appointed governor of Palestine (II Kings

25:25, Jeremiah 41:1-2), and the Fast of Esther (Adar 13), the day appointed by Haman for the slaughter of the Jews in Persian dominions (Esther 3:13). The first four fasts are connected with the destruction of the Jewish State and are also probably referred to in the Bible (Zechariah 8:19), thus indicating their antiquity. The Fast of Esther is supposed to have its origin in the reference contained in Esther 9:31.

Manner of Observance.—The fasting on all these days, with the exception of the Fast of Ab, begins with daybreak and lasts till sunset. During this time, partaking of food or drink of any kind is forbidden, but other physical enjoyments, as bathing, etc., which are forbidden on the Day of Atonement and on the Fast of Ab, are permitted. It is also permitted to follow all the ordinary occupations of life and to do all manner of work. The Rabbis were very lenient in prescribing the details of the laws pertaining to these fasts.

The morning and afternoon services in the synagogue are marked by the reading from the Torah (Exodus 32: 11-14; 34: 1-10), and at the afternoon services the Haftarah is read from Isaiah 55:6-56:8. In the morning services additional penitential prayers are chanted.

The Ninth of Ab.—The ninth day of Ab (Tish'ah b'Ab) commemorates the final stage in the overthrow of Jewish independence at the hands of the Babylonians. According to tradition, the destruction of the second Temple by the Romans in the year 70 C. E. also occurred on this day. It is therefore observed with more solemnity than any of the other fast days, marking, as it does, the twofold

disaster that befell the Jewish people. During all the eighteen centuries that have elapsed since that memorable day, the Jews have not ceased mourning for "the glory that has departed from them," in the destruction of their central government and central place of worship. Even in places where they were accorded freedom and equality, the memory of the great calamity that had befallen their ancestors on this day always brought sad reflections and mournful thoughts. Even those Jews who believe that it is not desirable for Israel to go back to Palestine, should such return ever be feasible, cannot but be moved to sad reflections on the anniversary of the horrible events that happened to their ancestors. Those who suffered during those days—and their suffering must have been very great—were **our** ancestors, **our** fathers and mothers. Therefore, we cannot remain untouched when these sufferings are recalled and recounted.

Observant Jews begin the period of mourning with the Fast of Tammuz. During these three weeks they abstain from all festivities and joyous celebrations. During this period no marriage ceremony is performed and no new garment is put on for the first time. Beginning with the New Moon of Ab and extending until the Fast of Ab (excepting the Sabbath day), no meat or wine is partaken of. Some do not eat meat or drink wine during all the three weeks intervening between the Fast of Tammuz and the Fast of Ab. The Sabbath preceding the Ninth of Ab is called Sabbath Hazon, after the initial word of the Haftarah for the day (Isaiah 1), which is chanted in a peculiarly mournful melody.

The fast itself, unlike the other minor fasts, begins with sunset of the eighth and extends to nightfall of the ninth. The same rigor is maintained re-

garding this fast as in the case of the Day of Atonement. In the synagogue all decorations are removed, even the curtain in front of the ark is taken away. The worshippers sit on low benches, in stockinged feet, and by dim candle light, in mournful melody, chant the Book of Lamentations and a number of elegies (Kinot). The same course is followed at the morning service, which is recited without Tallit or Tefillin, although these are worn during the afternoon service. Pious Jews abstain from any unnecessary kind of labor and spend the day in reading stories of the destruction as given in Jeremiah and the Book of Lamentations and in the later Rabbinic literature. (See Kohler, "Guide for Instruction in Judaism," pp. 125-127, where the attitude of the Reform Jews toward these Fast Days, especially the Fast of Ab, is given; compare Joseph, "Judaism as Creed and Life," pp. 209-210; Friedlander, "The Jewish Religion," pp. 412-413; Rosenau, "Jewish Ceremonial Institution and Customs," pp. 88-90; Abrahams, "Festival Studies," Chapter XI.)

In commemoration of the deliverance of the first-born of the Israelites in Egypt, when the first-born of the Egyptians were slain, the custom arose for all male first-born to observe the day preceding the Passover festival as a Fast day.

Some Jews observe as a Fast day the day preceding the New Moon (Yom Kippur Katan). As an atonement for any sins that might have been committed in the hilarity that accompanied the observance of the festivals, some fast on the first Monday, Thursday and the following Monday in the month following the festivals of Passover and Sukkot (Sheni, Hamishi and Sheni, comp. Job 1:5). Some fast also during the days when Selihot (penitential

prayers) are recited, beginning with the Sunday preceding the New Year. Various other fasts are observed by some for different reasons, but all these are voluntary and have never been universally accepted. The Rabbis are opposed to self-imposed fasting, considering the one who for no good reason denies himself the pleasures of the world, as a sinner, who needs atonement.

QUESTIONS

1. Give a brief account of the historic events that led to the Maccabean wars, beginning with the Babylonian exile.

2. Explain the term "Hellenism" as used in those days, and show how this mode of culture clashed with the teachings of Judaism.

3. Who were the Hasidim? What is the traditional meaning of the term Maccabee?

4. What is the distinctive manner of observance of the Festival of Hanukkah? Give the reason for this.

5. Give a résumé of the Hallel and show the appropriateness of reading these psalms on Hanukkah.

6. What is the appeal that Hanukkah makes to us at the present time? What should be the point of emphasis in presenting the lesson?

7. Indicate by means of headings (complete sentences) how you would present the lessons on Purim to a class of children of the age of 12 and 13.

8. How is Purim observed? How was the festival regarded by the Jews in the Middle Ages?

9. Mention, giving reasons, the other memorable dates in the Jewish calendar.

10. Name Fast days centering around the destruction of the Jewish State.

11. Why is the Fast of Esther observed?

12. What deprivations do Jews observing the seventeenth of Tammuz and the ninth of Ab impose upon themselves in the period between these two days?

13. When is the Fast of the first-born observed, and why?

IX. THE SYNAGOGUE AND THE SCHOOL

Origin and Purpose.—The description of the building of the Tabernacle in the wilderness (Exodus 35-40) follows closely upon the incident of the Golden Calf (Exodus 32). This juxtaposition has been interpreted to indicate the necessity of the one as a safeguard against the repetition of an offense like that of the Golden Calf. The sublime and exalted teachings of Moses regarding a spiritual God and a moral law were forgotten as soon as the dominating personality of the great leader was removed. The Israelites clamored for a visible god or for a concrete manifestation of the deity, of whose nature and attributes they could have but a dim comprehension. Moses was grieved, disappointed, indignant on beholding this perverted desire and executed summary punishment on those guilty of the offense. The incident itself, however, made him realize that men and women, made up of body and spirit, can be trained in spiritual matters only through material representations. Hence, he ordered the building of a Tabernacle, a portable tent, the symbol of God's continual presence in the midst of the people. "And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them" (Exodus 25:8).

This interpretation, though homiletical, contains a great psychological truth, which was followed by religious leaders of all ages. Abstract ideas and spiritual truths, in order to be adopted by the great masses of the people and to remain their permanent possession, must assume material form and be em-

bodied in concrete objects and ceremonies. The Tabernacle in the wilderness and the Temple in Jerusalem, with their elaborate sacrificial service and ritual, proved most necessary and most potent aids in the preservation of the great ideals of the Jewish religion. It is true, that at times the people forgot the purpose of these institutions and regarded them as an end in themselves, because the people did not realize that these institutions were merely the guide posts leading to the higher idea and to the spiritual truth. But the leaders of every generation, the men of might and spirit, the inspired prophets and the pious Rabbis, kept reminding the people constantly of the great ideas behind these institutions. This they could not have done, had the institutions not existed.

The purpose of the sanctuary, therefore, always was to emphasize the nearness of God to the community of Israel—the close proximity of the divine to human affairs. It always served as the symbol of the idea that God is ever near to man (cf. Psalms 145:18), that God is ever ready to listen to his prayers, to extend help and support to all who seek Him in truth, to offer consolation and solace to the weary and the distressed, and inspire with faith and hope the doubting and perplexed. (For the value of Public Worship, see the following Chapter.)

Origin of Synagogue.—The Tabernacle in the wilderness and the Temple in Jerusalem were primarily communal institutions, in which the individual was of minor consideration. The daily sacrifices were offered on behalf of the whole community of Israel, and even the offerings brought by individuals had to be sacrificed by the priest, "the messenger of the community." Only in very few

instances was the individual invited to take part in the service.

Alongside of this communal worship, private devotion must have existed from earliest times, although it is but rarely mentioned in the Bible. The desire to give vent to the feelings of gratitude to God or of reverence for Him, is part of human nature and must have found its expression, throughout the early history of Israel, in some form or other. This desire must have received additional stimulus with the growth of the religious sentiment and with the development of the national literature at the hands of prophet and poet. With the destruction of the Temple by the Babylonians and the exile of the Jews from their land, the feeling of personal responsibility was strengthened and sought expression in acts of religious devotion, independent of Temple and sacrifice. Thus we find, already during the Babylonian exile, mention of informal meetings held for the purpose of reading and studying the Torah and the words of the prophets. With the return to Palestine under Ezra, the synagogue (literally Assembly) became a permanent institution and existed everywhere in Palestine, and later also in other places where Jews lived. It was the place where the individual Jew gave vent to his religious emotions in worship or study. In Jerusalem, the synagogue existed side by side with the Temple and its elaborate system of sacrifices. Indeed, there was a synagogue even on the Temple mount.

Throughout the period of the second Commonwealth the synagogue grew in importance and in the affection of the people, so that the shock to the religious life of the nation, at the destruction of the second Temple, was considerably tempered by the fact that the substitute was at hand, which little by

little took the place of the Temple in the hearts of the people. Gradually a set system of prayers was evolved and adopted, which followed the lines of the system of sacrifices in the Temple, and afforded every individual the opportunity to come in close communion with his God. There were many causes during the second Commonwealth that helped in the development of the synagogue, not the least among these being the decline of the priestly power and prestige, through the misdeeds of some of the priestly families. The Pharisees, the representatives of the people and the champions of their rights, naturally clung to the synagogue and gave it the peculiar form and functions that it preserved throughout all these centuries. While never antagonistic to the Temple, the synagogue helped to emphasize the democratic spirit of the Jewish religion and to arouse the feelings of personal responsibility in the hearts of the individual Jew.

Synagogue and School.—The earliest references to the synagogue identify it with the house of study, although in later times distinction is made between the Bet ha-Keneset (House of Assembly, Synagogue), and the Bet ha-Midrash (House of Study). Indeed, even the elementary school for children is supposed to have had its origin in the synagogue. The growth of the synagogue was, no doubt, a most potent incentive to education. The religious independence of the individual, which found its expression in the democratic synagogue, made it necessary for the individual to become familiar with the sources of his religion. One cannot exercise his responsibilities, unless one knows what they are and how to fulfill them. Hence the popularization of Jewish learning became a necessary corollary to the

idea of the democratization of Jewish worship. To this end, the labors of Ezra and his associates (the Scribes) contributed the largest share. By transcribing the Law and making copies of it accessible to the masses, the Scribes took the Law from the hitherto undisputed keeping of the priests and made it the possession of all the people. The synagogue and the school were thus the product of a similar tendency and grew up side by side. Popular education was widespread at the time of the destruction of the second Temple, so that it is related that "there were four hundred and eighty synagogues in Jerusalem, each having attached to it a Bet Sefer (elementary school), and a Bet Talmud (high school), all of which Vespasian destroyed."

After the downfall of Jerusalem at the hands of the Romans when the synagogues became supreme in the religious life of the Jew, the school also increased in importance. Learning became the passion of the Jew. No other aristocracy but that of learning was, throughout the Diaspora, recognized in Jewry. The Am ha-Aretz, the ignorant man, was distrusted, looked down upon, while the Talmid Hacham, the student of the Law, was accorded many privileges. The result was that, even during the darkest periods of the dark ages, there were hardly any illiterates among the Jews. Wherever Jews settled, their first concern was to establish a house for communal prayer and to procure a teacher for their children. The highest ambition of a parent, for which he was willing to make the greatest sacrifices, was to see his child become a great scholar. The school has thus ever been an integral part of Jewish life and an essential feature in the organization of a Jewish community, so that the Rabbis declared that a "city which does not provide for the

elementary education of its children ought to be destroyed."

The synagogue and the school, from their very inception, were closely connected, so that the functions of the two were frequently interchanged—the Bet ha-Midrash serving also as a house of prayer, while the Bet ha-Keneset was frequently used to expound and explain the word of God. Worship and study were ever regarded by Jews of equal sanctity and of equal religious importance. Indeed, our ritual has many elements of study in it, while study was always looked upon as a religious act—a part of religious devotion. So much have these two been identified as to cause the promulgation of the Rabbinic principle that "the ignoramus cannot be a pious man." The ignoramus was regarded incapable of living a truly moral life. Judaism demands intelligent service and intelligent service comes only through study and investigation. (See Simon and Rosenau, "Jewish Education," Historical Survey, The Biblical Era, 27-30.)

The Synagogue as a Social Centre.—Besides being the spiritual and intellectual centre of the Jews, the synagogue, and more especially the Bet ha-Midrash of the Middle Ages, was also the social centre of the Jewish community. This is not at all strange in a community in which religion is regarded as identical with life, as was the case among the Jews. Excluded from the political and social life of the people in whose midst they lived, the medieval Jews found in the synagogue all the interests for which their hearts were craving. The synagogue absorbed within its walls all the activities of communal and social life, and thereby helped to hallow all the details of life. Its doors were always open,

the people were always engaged there in worship, study or friendly dispute. There charity was collected and distributed. There the stranger found a hearty welcome, and his needs were attended to. There the oppressed or wronged found a hearing, and, when possible, also redress.

Even before the Ghetto became a legalized institution in Europe, the synagogue was the centre around which the Jewish quarter grew up in most communities. This close relationship among the Jews made them feel as if they all belonged to one family, sharing in each other's joys and sorrows. In the synagogue, this feeling found expression in the festivities accompanying the first visit of the bridegroom after his wedding, in which all worshippers participated. Other private joys were shared by the community in the synagogue, as the celebration of circumcision, of Bar-Mizwah, and other similar events in the family life. Private sorrows also were shared by all the members of the community. The mourner was visited in his home by all his friends, and, on coming to synagogue on Sabbath, he was accorded the sympathy of the community as a body. In the synagogue, the Jew thus found himself surrounded by friends and well-wishers. There he felt himself at home, even though cast out from the society of the people surrounding him. There all his wants received kindly consideration. No wonder, therefore, that the institution of the synagogue was so highly cherished and regarded with such affection by the Jews of all ages. (See Abrahams, "Jewish Life in the Middle Ages," ch. I, II.)

The Synagogue and Its Utensils.—While the architecture and internal decorations and arrangements of the synagogue differed greatly in various

lands and times, certain elements which have met with general acceptance are distinctive of the physical side of the synagogue.

The ark (Aron, or Aron ha-Kodesh—holy ark) is the most prominent feature in all synagogues. It is usually built in the middle of the eastern wall, and is supposed to symbolize the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle and the Temple. The worshippers face the east, thus directing their gaze toward Jerusalem, the place of the Temple mount (comp. I Kings 8: 48). Jews living east of Jerusalem turn westward, and in such places the ark is built in the western wall of the synagogue. The ark contains copies of the scroll of the Law (Sefer Torah). Not a few congregations boast of a large collection of such copies, some of which date from ancient time. The ark is covered with a curtain (Parochet), made of satin or plush, and having some artistic designs embroidered on it in gold.

The scrolls of the law deposited in the ark contain the five books of Moses, written on parchment (made of the skin of a "clean" animal) by an expert and pious scribe. The skins are sewed together with thread made of sinews of "clean" animals, and then rolled around two rollers. The scroll is then made secure by a band tied around it. This band or wrapper, made of silk or linen, is often the donation of a male child when he first visits the synagogue. The scroll is then covered with a mantle or robe, usually made of plush or velvet, and richly embroidered in gold. Over the upper rollers (Etz Hayyim) are usually placed silver bells, artistically worked, and over the robe a breast-plate and a pointer are suspended by chains. These silver pieces are frequently designated as "holy vessels" (Kele Kodesh).

Immediately in front of the ark is suspended the Perpetual Light (Ner Tamid), symbolizing the golden candlestick in the sanctuary (Exodus 27 : 21). This is made of gold, silver, or brass, and is kept continually lighted. Its introduction in the synagogue is of comparatively recent date, and its proximity to the ark has been interpreted as emblematic of the conviction that the Law of Israel will always be the light and guiding star to humanity throughout all generations.

In many synagogues, a raised platform (Bemah, Almemar) is erected in the middle of the building, from which the lessons from the Torah and the Prophets are read, and from which the Rabbi or preacher delivers his discourses. Custom differs widely as to the place occupied by the precentor (Sheliah Zibbur, Hazzan) who leads the congregation in prayer. In some synagogues, the reader is stationed near a small stand below the platform of the ark, in accordance with the literal meaning of the words of the Psalmist, "Out of the depths have I called Thee, O Lord!" (Psalm 130:1). In others, the reader chants the prayers from the Bemah, in the middle of the synagogue. In some modern synagogues, the Bemah is pushed forward near the ark, one platform serving both purposes. The Bemah has only a reading desk, usually covered with a richly embroidered satin or plush cover, and a bench.

In most synagogues, the custom still prevails of providing a separate section for women. Such provision was also made in the Temple and the precedent has been followed to the present day. In olden times, the women congregated in a room adjoining the synagogue, and communicating with it by means of a row of windows, which were carefully

curtained. Thus, the women could follow the service without being seen by the men. In more modern times, instead of this special room, there are galleries running along both sides of the synagogue, which are set aside for the women. In many reform synagogues, no special provision is made for women, men and women sitting together in the body of the building or in the galleries.

In agreement with the injunction contained in the second commandment, the interior of the synagogue is marked by the greatest simplicity. There are no pictures, statues or images of any kind, although the walls occasionally have inscriptions of Scriptural passages. The six-pointed star (Magen David, Shield of David) found in some synagogues, is probably not of Jewish origin and is of comparatively recent date.

Unlike the Temple service, the synagogue service is marked by the absence of instrumental music. The reason for this is, because of the Rabbinic prohibition against the use of instrumental music on Sabbaths and holidays. In later times, this absence of instrumental music in the synagogue was interpreted as a sign of mourning for the destruction of the Temple. In reform synagogues, the organ has been introduced, and in many of them is used also on Sabbaths and Festivals.

The arrangement and construction of the Bet ha-Midrash resemble in every detail those of the synagogue, except that in the case of the former everything is more severely plain and modest. In many modern synagogues, especially in this land, the lower floor of the synagogue is fitted up as a Bet ha-Midrash, where prayers are read on week days, and where people assemble for study. (Rosenau, "Jewish Ceremonial Institutions and Customs," pp. 11-33;

Friedlander, "The Jewish Religion," pp. 423-429; Jewish Encyclopedia, s. v. Synagogue.)

RÉSUMÉ

King Solomon, in his prayer of dedication, after the Temple was erected, clearly sets forth the purpose of the sanctuary. "Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less this house that I have builded!" (I Kings 8: 27). God's glory fills the universe. His providence is everywhere. The sanctuary is the symbol of this great idea of the omnipresence of the divine in human affairs. It is for the service of men that a certain place is set aside, devoted especially to holy deeds and to communion with God. This place receives its additional sanctity from the very usage to which it is put. The synagogue, as the sanctuary of old, is thus merely the concrete expression of the feeling that God is near to us and ready to listen to our prayers.

The synagogue differed from the temple in so far as it gave free scope to the layman, to every individual Jew, to take part in the religious service. The essential nature of the Jewish religion received its truest and noblest expression in the synagogue, where the responsibility of the individual received new emphasis and was given room for development. The democratic spirit of the Jewish religion, which permits the approach of the humblest individual to the divine, was given the fullest scope in the worship of the synagogue.

The popularization of religious learning became a necessary consequence of the popularization of the religious service. "Know thou the God of thy father and serve Him" (I Chronicles 28:9) was the

advice given by David to his son Solomon, and this later became the standard of Jewish life. In order to serve God intelligently, it is necessary that we acquire some knowledge of His nature and of what He demands of us. This attitude to study, as an important element in religious service, gave the Jews the proud appellation of the "People of the Book." "To study and to teach, to keep and to do," this is the ideal of Jewish religious life. Hence, the close relationship which has always existed between the synagogue and the school.

The synagogue was not only a house of prayer and study. It was also the social centre of the Jewish community. When religion was co-extensive with life, the house devoted to religion also supplied all the needs of life, social as well as religious. This feature is still, though in a much smaller degree, maintained in the various social activities of the societies auxiliary to the congregation, which deserve all possible commendation and encouragement.

Though simple in design and architecture, the synagogue does not present a sombre appearance. Congregations are enjoined to exert their utmost in decorating the synagogue and making its appearance beautiful. While differing in the architectural design and internal appointments, there are certain essential elements by which all synagogues are distinguished. The ark with its scrolls of the Law, the perpetual lamp, the reading desk—these are common to all synagogues. Even in places where many innovations were made, these features are still maintained, thus retaining the essential character of the synagogue.

QUESTIONS

1. Describe the purpose of the sanctuary.

2. Give a brief description of the origin of the synagogue.

3. Explain the terms Bet ha-Keneset and Bet ha-Midrash. Show the relationship between these two institutions in Jewish history.

4. In what way did the establishment of the synagogue help in the extension of Jewish education?

5. Describe the use of the synagogue as a social centre. What value did this have in the past? Should this feature be maintained in the modern synagogue?

6. Describe the various features common to all synagogues.

7. Give a detailed description of the scrolls of the Law—their form, preparation and use.

8. Give the reason for the absence of pictures and statues in the synagogue; for the absence of instrumental music in many a synagogue's service.

X. PUBLIC WORSHIP

Origin and Purpose.—The importance of a central place of worship for strengthening the national bonds and for preserving the integrity of the national religion was recognized early in the development of Judaism. Frequent references are made in the Bible to the prohibition against bringing sacrifices in any other place but that appointed by God as the national sanctuary. "But unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put His name there, even unto His habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come" (Deuteronomy 12:5 ff.; 14:23; 16:6, 7, 11, 15, et al.). While for a long time this was not strictly observed, the establishment of an ecclesiastical centre in Jerusalem served as a most potent aid in cementing the union of the tribes and in gradually eradicating the idolatrous practices and ideas that lingered among the people of Judea. Jeroboam feared the influence of that stronghold of national solidarity, and his attempt to destroy the unity of Israel was accompanied by the erection of new centres of worship (I Kings 12:26-33; comp. II Chronicles 11: 13-16; 13: 4-12). The state of the development of the religious ideas of the people was mirrored in the Temple service, and this in its turn helped to preserve the religious ideals of the nation.

With the development of the synagogue, communal worship became more firmly established, although it remained for a long time in a fluid state as to its form. The need for holding the people together and strengthening the ties that united them became more strongly felt after the destruction of

the Temple and the loss of national independence. The wise Rabbis of that generation provided against national rupture by making prayer a sufficient substitute for sacrifices and by establishing a uniform mode of worship. The essential elements of our present prayer-book had their origin and acquired their present form in the period immediately following the destruction of the Temple by the Romans (70 A. C. E.). A common prayer-book was regarded as the strongest safeguard against national disintegration. Public worship, which became general wherever Jews settled, helped to unite the Jews of any particular community with the Jews of all other communities. It gave expression to the ideals, the hopes and aspirations of the Keneset Israel (the whole community of Israel), and this preserved the solidarity of the Jewish people and the integrity of the Jewish religion.

Its Value for the Individual.—Public worship has thus greatly helped in the preservation of the unity of the Jewish people. No matter how different from each other Jews may be in dress, in culture, even in personal appearance, they feel drawn towards each other on entering a synagogue, the place devoted to public worship. Not only does public worship bring all the worshippers of a certain place closely together, but it also helps to unite all Israel in all the lands of its dispersion and to cement the bond of union between the present and all past generations of Israel. Expressing as it does the noblest ideals of the Jewish religion, as conceived by the great leaders and teachers, public worship was also a most potent influence in preserving the integrity of the religion and its most essential elements.

The individual who abstains from public worship,

who visits the synagogue only on certain stated occasions or not at all, misses that blessed influence, even though he be careful to pray at home at regular intervals. In truth, he misses a great deal more. Apart from the fact that he is deprived of the great aid in the development of the Jewish consciousness which public worship fosters, he misses other very important aids to devotion in prayer. Not only does worship become more dignified and more exalted when joined in by a large gathering (comp. the Rabbinic interpretation of the verse in Proverbs 14: 28, "In the multitude of people is the king's glory," to refer to public worship), but it also becomes more devotional. Enthusiasm is aroused. Religious fervor is kindled by the feeling that one is a member of a large community, seeking a common end and intent upon one purpose—the communion with the God of Israel. In joining in public worship, the individual becomes transported by the consciousness of companionship with a large multitude which is actuated by one great emotion.

The attendance upon synagogue service thus serves as an expression of loyalty to the religion of Israel and to the God of Israel, as well as to develop the finer religious sensibilities in one's heart. The Jew who takes part in the public worship of the community thereby testifies to his attachment to his people and to his God. He helps in the preservation of one of the strongest institutions of Judaism and provides a spur to his own religious emotions. He openly declares his affiliation and strengthens it. He manifests his loyalty and reinforces it. He expresses his emotions and stimulates them.

Need of Special Emphasis.—The teacher should not neglect the opportunity to impress upon his

class the importance of synagogue attendance and of the participation in public worship. Synagogue attendance demands greater emphasis now than ever before. With the fall of the Ghetto walls and with the attainment of political equality, many distinct features of Jewish life have become obliterated. The Jewish atmosphere is wanting, and even in the Jewish home we miss the numerous characteristic signs and symbols by which it has in the past been distinguished. The only place which still maintains the distinctive Jewish spirit is the synagogue, and the only institution that has, to a large extent, withstood the onslaughts of modernity and secularism and remained in its essential features the same as in former years is the Jewish communal worship. It is our duty to guard this institution most carefully and to impress its importance upon the minds of the growing youth. The Jewish child should be urged to make of synagogue attendance a habit, a necessary part of his life. He should be given the opportunity to join in the services and thus realize his importance in the community of Israel. If the school provides a separate service for children, this service should, as much as possible, contain the same elements as are found in the regular service. At the earliest moment the child should be brought to synagogue and urged to join in its service. The influence of communal worship in emphasizing devotion to the Jewish cause and attachment to the Jewish religion is incalculable.

The Quorum Required.—The minimum number required by traditional law to constitute public worship is ten male adults (Minyan-number). If there are not as many present, the regular service may still be read, with the omission, however, of certain

portions which are also omitted when one prays privately. In some modern reform synagogues, public worship is conducted even when the customary number of ten worshippers is not present.

The Language of Public Worship.—Public worship being primarily the religious expression of united Israel, the language employed in this expression was naturally the language common to all Israel. Although Hebrew ceased to be the language of the Jews long before the prayer-book assumed its present form, the framers of our liturgy thought it wise to preserve that language in the public worship, since it is the language of all the great treasures of our faith. The individual may and should pray in the language which he understands best, which will best express to him his innermost desires and yearnings. The community, however, should pray in Hebrew, the national language of all Israel.

The principle underlying this practice has been recognized by Jews of all times and of all shades of thought. While at different times prayers in the vernacular have been introduced in public worship, the frame-work of the service in the synagogue has always been rendered in the original Hebrew tongue. Aside from the great devotional value that the Hebrew language possesses, it is and will always remain the language common to all Israel and should, therefore, always be the medium of expression in the religious service of all Israel. If public worship is to retain its original purpose and serve the end of uniting the people of Israel and preserving the religion of Israel, it can be accomplished best through the medium of the Hebrew language, the language of Israel. The argument frequently

advanced in favor of supplanting the Hebrew by the vernacular because many people at present do not understand Hebrew should be answered as it was always answered by Jews: "Go and learn." It is incumbent upon every Israelite, if he would remain loyal and faithful to his people and to his religion, to learn at least so much Hebrew as to enable him to understand and follow the communal service. Complete substitution of the vernacular for Hebrew in public worship will lead to the defeat of the very purpose of Jewish public worship and will weaken that Jewish consciousness which public worship is intended to arouse and foster. (See Berkowitz, "The New Education in Religion," pp. 69, 86, 104.)

In many modern congregations, especially such as do not adhere strictly to all the traditions and observances of Judaism, a number of prayers are recited in the vernacular. But even in these the Hebrew language is retained in the most essential parts of the service. Whatever concessions may be made to the exigencies of the time, it is still recognized that the more Hebrew the service contains the more Jewish it is and the more powerful its appeal to the conscience of united Israel. The Hebrew language is one of the strongest links that unite us with our glorious past and with all Israel of the present, and it should be regarded a matter of national pride for every Jew to understand the Hebrew language and use it at the moment when he most closely identifies himself with the past of his people and with all his brethren in all the lands of their dispersion.

The Attitude During Prayer.—Just as discipline and good behavior are essential in public instruction, so are decorum and dignity primary requirements of public worship. Unbecoming conduct, conver-

sation and restlessness during the time of prayer must not be tolerated. Still, we should not permit decorum to degenerate into a stiffness that chills the heart and stifles natural emotions and impulses. The hearty response, even though it be at times discordant and injurious to musical harmony, should be encouraged. A service is only, then, truly public when the public is offering it, and not when the Reader chants it and the congregation decorously listens in silence. Congregational singing and congregational praying, conducted with dignity and harmony, give life and interest to the service and arouse the finer emotions of individual responsibility.

Prayers are recited either sitting or standing. Kneeling is not permitted, except at certain moments during the Musaf (additional) service of the New Year and of the Day of Atonement. The prohibition against kneeling is probably of a later date and may have had as its reason the desire to differentiate Jewish from Christian worship, after the latter had adopted kneeling as the rule in worship. The 'Amidah (standing) or Shemoneh Esreh (Eighteen, see next chapter) is, as a rule, recited while standing. Custom varies with regard to the posture to be assumed during the reading of the other parts of the service.

To keep the head covered during service is an ancient Jewish custom. In the Orient, the covering of the head is a sign of respect, and it has, therefore, been customary among Jews not only to pray with covered head, but also to cover the head in the performance of any religious act or study. This custom has survived even the adoption by Jews of European habits in dress and general conduct. In many synagogues even where other traditional customs have

been abolished, worshippers still keep their heads covered. It has always been one of the most conspicuous features of a Jewish service (comp. I Corinthians 2:4, 7), and it is only in the most recent times that in some synagogues the custom has been discarded and public service is conducted with uncovered head (Rosenau, "Jewish Ceremonial Institutions and Customs," pp. 48-50; Jewish Encyclopedia, s. v. Bareheadedness).

Personal cleanliness is a necessary requirement for worship. One should not begin to pray before he has washed his hands. In some synagogues, a laver and towels are provided in the ante-room for the worshippers to wash their hands before the service.

It is regarded a meritorious act to walk rapidly to synagogue and to endeavor to be there before the time set for the service. It is also recommended that one should have a permanent seat in the synagogue, which one should always occupy during prayer. As a special sign of mourning, the mourner in many an orthodox synagogue does not occupy his usual seat during the year of mourning for a parent.

Periods of Public Worship.—Three set services have been fixed for every day. These are Shaharit (Morning service), and Minhah (Afternoon service), probably to correspond to the daily sacrifices offered in the Temple, and 'Arbit or Ma'arib (Evening service). On Sabbaths, Festivals, and New Moons, an additional service (Musaf) is held, usually soon after the morning service, corresponding to the additional sacrifice that was offered in the Temple on these days. On the Day of Atonement, another service, Ne'ilah (Closing) is rendered at the end of the day's service.

The antiquity of the custom of praying thrice daily is seen from the references to that custom in Psalms 55:18 and Daniel 6:11. There are certain elements common to all these services, notably the Amidah or Shemoneh 'Esreh. If one is unable to attend synagogue and join with the public in all these services, one may recite them privately at home. The main distinction between such private prayer and the public service is that in the former case the following elements are omitted: Borchu, the recitation of the Kaddish, the repetition of the Amidah and the reading of the portion from the scroll of the Law. It is permitted, however, to conduct public service outside of the synagogue, with all these elements included, especially when one is unable to leave his house, as in the case of a mourner during the first seven days (Shib'ah) of mourning; the only requisite, under the circumstances, being that ten adult males (Minyan) be present.

RÉSUMÉ

Public worship has been one of the most potent influences in the preservation of Judaism. It has been instrumental in preserving the brotherhood of the Jewish people and in maintaining the purity of the Jewish religion. By attending the synagogue and joining in its service the Jew proclaims his attachment to Judaism and his loyalty to his people. It is also a powerful incentive towards arousing religious emotion and devoutness in prayer. No one can resist the influence of a large community united in prayer to God.

Synagogue attendance should be enjoined by the teacher upon his class. Children should be trained to make a habit of attendance at divine service.

With the secularization of Jewish life, the attendance at synagogue should be given constant impetus and emphasis.

Hebrew has always been the Jewish language of prayer. It is the language in which the greatest treasures of the Jewish people are enshrined. It is the language still common to Jews of all lands. It is, therefore, the best means of strengthening national loyalty which public worship seeks to accomplish. Every Jew should regard it as a sacred duty to learn to understand the language at least to such a degree as to be able to follow divine service intelligently.

Public worship should be conducted with dignity and decorum. Still, this point may be overemphasized. Too much insistence on decorum, bordering on passivity, may lead to making the service lifeless and chill the spirit of the worshippers. Devout participation in the service, even though the tone be discordant at times, should not be frowned upon. The hearty response and the loud chant, even when it lacks in musical harmony, should rather be encouraged and stimulated. Public worship is most effective when the congregation is urged to join in singing and praying.

QUESTIONS

1. What reason would you give for the Biblical prohibition against offering sacrifices in any other place but in the central sanctuary?

2. Explain the purpose of public worship.

3. Mention its significance for the individual.

4. Why should special emphasis be placed at present on attendance at synagogue?

5. Define "Minyan." How does public worship differ from private devotion?

6. Defend and explain the use of Hebrew in public service.

7. What attitude should we assume towards the question of decorum in synagogue?

8. Give the reason for having the head covered during prayer.

9. Mention the fixed prayers, giving their Hebrew names.

10. Describe the value of congregational singing.

XI. PUBLIC WORSHIP (CONTINUED)

The Jewish Liturgy.—As has been indicated in the previous lessons, the Jewish liturgy was, in its main features, well established at the time of the destruction of the second Temple (70 C. E.). The liturgy was primarily designed for public worship, in which every individual might insert prayers that would suit his particular needs and requirements. In the main the liturgy is the expression of the faith and hopes, of the joys and sorrows of united Israel. All the prayers and supplications are put in the plural number, thus indicating their original public character. Hence, the Messianic hope and prayers for the restoration of Jewish national independence and for the rebuilding of Jerusalem find a most prominent place in the liturgy. The fullest freedom, however, was accorded to the individual worshipper to add any prayer that might best express his peculiar needs and emotions.

It is characteristic of the Jewish Prayer Book that prayers of praise and adoration, of thanksgiving and homage occupy a more prominent position than prayers of supplication. The Book of Psalms is largely drawn upon for use in the Prayer Book and numerous devotional passages from other parts of the Bible are combined in hymns of adoration. Even the prayers of supplication are not so much prayers for material well-being as for spiritual attainments, for the ability to understand God's law and follow it, to recognize His greatness and follow in His ways. The yearning for closer communion with God, the

eager desire to be free from sin and to overcome temptation, the passionate longing for a clearer intellectual insight, for understanding and knowledge, are the sentiments most frequently met with in the Jewish Prayer Book. There are, indeed, prayers for health and plenty, for personal comfort and prosperity, for relief from trouble and pain, but these are entirely overshadowed by the more spiritual and more universal. The prayers for universal justice and righteousness, for universal peace and an exalted morality, for the spread of true knowledge and pure religion, are by far more numerous than those that have the material and selfish end in view. In fact, the latter, while regarded as proper and right, are inserted mainly in private devotion and omitted from the public service. The Jewish conception of God and of human life in its relation to the divine precludes too much stress being laid on trivial matters that affect only the body and the material side of man's well-being. (See Joseph, "Judaism as Creed and Life," pp. 258-268.)

The two most important elements of the Jewish liturgy are the Shema' and the 'Amidah or Shemoneh 'Esreh.

The Shema'—The Shema' consists of three selections from the Pentateuch. The first section, beginning with the words "Shema' Israel" (Hear, O Israel) is taken from Deuteronomy 6: 4-9 and contains the Jewish confession of faith. Here the unity of God is proclaimed; the love of God is emphasized; and the duty to study His Law and to teach it to our children is enjoined. The second section is from Deuteronomy 11: 13-21. Here the justice of God is taught—the great truth that virtue will surely find its reward and sin will as surely meet with retribu-

tion. The third section is from Numbers 15: 37-41. This section contains the law regarding the wearing of Zizit (fringes), which are to serve as a constant reminder to the Jew of his duties to his God and to his religion and as a warning against following the evil inclinations of his heart. "That you remember and do all my commandments and be holy unto your God."

The Shema' is read both at the morning and evening services ("when thou liest down and when thou risest up"), and is considered as the most solemn part of the service. It is probably the most ancient element of public worship, since the Mishnah already speaks of it as a well-established institution. In the morning service the reading of the Shema' is preceded by two benedictions, known by their initial words, as "Yozer Or" (in which God is thanked for the regular sequence of day and night, light and darkness) and "Ahabah Rabbah" (in which God is praised for giving us the Torah, and His help is invoked in its study and understanding). This is followed by one blessing, "Emet we-Yazzib" or "Geulah" (in which God is blessed for the redemption of Israel from Egyptian bondage and declared as our Redeemer also in the future). In the evening service the reading of the Shema' is also preceded and followed by benedictions of the same import as those in the morning, except that in the evening an additional benediction is recited, which contains a prayer for protection during the night. In many congregations another prayer is added in the evening service of the week-days which may have served originally as a substitute for the Shemoneh 'Esreh. This begins with the words "Baruch Adonai le-'Olam" (Blessed be the Lord forever) and consists of a number of scriptural passages, concluding with

a prayer for the rebuilding of Zion and for the establishment of the Kingdom of God upon earth.

The Shemoneh 'Esreh.—The 'Amidah (literally, Standing) is the second important element of the Jewish liturgy. It is also referred to as Tefillah (prayer *par excellence*) or Shemoneh 'Esreh (eighteen, the number of its original paragraphs). This is recited at the morning, afternoon and evening services, as well as at all the services recited on Sabbaths, New Moons and Festivals.

Although still designated as the "Eighteen" (Shemoneh 'Esreh), this prayer now has nineteen paragraphs, the twelfth paragraph having been added in the time of Rabban Gamaliel of Jamnia (first century of the present era) and is directed against slanderers and denunciators, who plot to do harm to the Jewish community. These nineteen paragraphs fall into a natural division of three groups—the first group (1-3) containing praises of God (Shebahim), the second (4-16) containing petitions (Bakkashot) and the last group (17-19) containing thanksgiving (Hodaah). The first and the third groups are constant in all services, while the middle group is recited only on week days. On Sabbaths and Holidays, these thirteen paragraphs are replaced by one, which deals with the characteristic feature of the day. It was not regarded proper to offer petitions on Sabbaths and Holidays, since these may bring up sad reflections and thus mar the festive character of the day. Thus the 'Amidah for Sabbaths and Holidays has only seven, instead of nineteen, paragraphs. The only exception to this is the Musaf (additional) 'Amidah of Rosh ha-Shanah, which has nine paragraphs.

The contents of the nineteen benedictions may be

Scroll of the Law (Sefer Torah) Unrolled

briefly summarized as follows: 1, Praise of God, the God of our fathers, the Patriarchs; 2, of God's power; 3, of God's holiness; 4, petition for understanding and knowledge; 5, for help to return to God; 6, for forgiveness of sin; 7, for deliverance from trouble and for redemption; 8, for health; 9, for plenty and prosperity; 10, for the gathering of the exiles; 11, for the installation of righteous judges and counsellors; 12, for protection against the slanders of the wicked; 13, for the full reward to be meted out to the righteous; 14, for the rebuilding of Jerusalem; 15, for the reestablishment of the Davidic dynasty; 16, for the favorable acceptance of all the aforementioned prayers; 17, for the reintroduction of the divine service in the Temple; 18, thanksgiving for all of God's mercies; 19, for the establishment of universal peace.

The prevalent custom is for each worshipper to recite the 'Amidah silently, while standing, and then the reader (Hazzan, Sheliah Zibbur) repeats it aloud, the congregation responding "Amen" after each one of the blessings. During the repetition of the 'Amidah by the reader the "Kedushah" (sanctification) is inserted in the third paragraph. This is a prayer of adoration, proclaiming the glory and holiness of God, and is recited in responsive reading by the reader and the congregation. Before the last paragraph the reader recites the priestly benediction (Numbers 6: 24-26), when this is not done by the Kohanim (the descendants of the priests), who may be present. In most synagogues, this blessing is pronounced by the Kohanim only in the Musaf service on holidays, although originally it was probably spoken by them at every service. (Friedlander, "The Jewish Religion," pp. 436-439; Jewish Encyclopedia, s. v. Shema', Shemoneh 'Esreh.)

The Kaddish—The Kaddish (literally, holy) is a messianic prayer for the hastening of the establishment of the kingdom of God, when God's name will be glorified and universal peace will be established. With the exception of the last sentence, it is in the Aramaic language, the language spoken by the Jews during the second Commonwealth and later in Babylon. Originally it was recited, with responses by the congregation, after the completion of some religious study or discourse. In later times, it was incorporated in the public service, in different forms, and is always recited, in one form or another, at the conclusion of some definite section of the service. The mourners' Kaddish is recited after the reading of a psalm or a hymn, or after a scriptural reading or study. The idea that the Kaddish has a saving power, to redeem the dead from the sufferings of Gehenna, is of late, Kabbalistic origin. The mystical idea gave to the Kaddish elements full of lasting significance. The thought that the child owes much of his virtue and character to the training given him by his parent naturally gave rise to the idea that the child's piety and conduct, which the parent helped to develop, might serve to propitiate the sins of the parent. The child that recites the glories of God at a public gathering, the congregation listening to his prayer and responding to it, thereby testifies to the religious training that his parent gave him and recalls the merit of the deceased father or mother. There is, above all else, this sublime motive and thought, that the mourner, after the pain of a great bereavement, thus gives expression to his faith in God and his resignation to His will. These nobler and more spiritual purposes of the Kaddish need to be better understood since the other idea seems to be the more widely accepted, as shown

by several details in the observance of the custom. The period of mourning extends over one year, but the Kaddish is recited only for eleven months. The reason for this is connected with the belief that the punishment of Gehenna does not extend for more than twelve months. It would be ungracious for a child to think so lightly of the merits of his parent as to class him with the most wicked, who are punished for twelve months. Hence, "Kaddish" is recited only for eleven months. It is also recited on the anniversary of a parent's death (Yahrzeit). (Jewish Encyclopedia, article "Kaddish.")

In this connection it may be mentioned that Memorial Services for the dead are recited periodically in the synagogue, especially on Yom Kippur and on the last days of the three festivals. Each worshipper recites the prayer silently, mentioning the name of his dear departed ones, while the reader recites a special prayer for the souls of the prominent members of the community, whose memory is thus recalled. The Memorial Service is given special consideration on Yom Kippur in the modern Reform Synagogues.

Scriptural Readings.—Scriptural readings always formed an important part of public worship. A periodic public reading of the Torah is even enjoined in the Pentateuch (Deuteronomy 31: 10-13). There have, however, been various customs in vogue as to the quantity and manner of such reading. In the course of time, a peculiar cantillation was established for the reading from the Torah and another for the reading from the Prophets. It was also established that the Torah be completed once every year or once in every three years. The prevalent custom at present is to complete the reading of

the Torah every year, and with this end in view the Pentateuch is divided into fifty-four sections (sidra, sedarim). The first section (Bereshit) is read on the Sabbath immediately following the feast of Sukkot, and the last section (Ve-Zot ha-Berachah) is read on Simhat Torah, when the completion of the reading of the Torah is fittingly celebrated. On festivals, appropriate selections pertaining to the nature of the feast are read.

Originally, the worshippers themselves read the selections to which they were called. At present, however, the whole section is read by an expert reader (Ba'al Kore), while those honored by being called up to the reading desk are content with reciting the benedictions before and after the reading. Selections from the Torah are read at the public service of every Saturday morning and afternoon, also on Mondays and Thursdays, New Moons, Festivals and Fast days and the week-days of the festivals (Hol ha-Mo'ed). The number of persons called up to the reading varies as follows: On Sabbath afternoons, Mondays and Thursdays, Hanukkah and Purim and Fast Days three are called up; on New Moons and Hol ha-Mo'ed four; on Rosh Hashanah and the other Festivals five; on the Day of Atonement six and on Sabbaths seven. On days when a selection from the Prophets is also read, the person invited to read this (Maftir) also repeats the last few verses of the section from the Torah. The first honor is usually given to a Kohen and the second to a Levite.

Besides the sidra, a selection from the Prophets (Haftarah) is read on Sabbaths and holidays. This is taken either from the Early or Later Prophets and usually bears some relation to the subject matter of the Pentateuchal portion for the day. It is gen-

erally supposed that this custom originated in times of persecution, when the reading from the Torah was forbidden. Since the Torah could be read only from a scroll, while the Prophets might also be read by heart, a prophetic reading was substituted for the section of the Torah. When the prohibition was removed, these prophetic readings were still retained and were read immediately after the sidra, with which the service was concluded (Haftarah-conclusion). The reading of the Haftarah is preceded and followed by a special set of blessings.

In olden times, the reading from the Torah and from the Prophets was followed by a translation in the vernacular. This custom had been in vogue during the Second Commonwealth and continued throughout the Talmudic period. This practice, however, has long since been discontinued and was only recently revived in the modern Reform synagogues. In many of these synagogues, the triennial cycle (and in some even a septennial) is followed instead of the generally prevalent annual cycle of reading the Law. The custom of "calling up" individual worshippers to the section ('Aliyah) assigned to each one, has also been abolished in many Reform synagogues, where the reader recites the blessings and also the sidra, omitting also the peculiar cantillation with which the reading is chanted in most synagogues. (Friedlander, "The Jewish Religion," pp. 345-349; Joseph, "Judaism as Creed and Life," pp. 224-5; Rosenau, "Jewish Ceremonial Institutions and Customs," pp. 33-43.)

Other Elements of Public Worship.—In addition to the reading of the Shema' with its accompanying blessings and of the Shemoneh 'Esreh, the Jewish liturgy contains also a number of blessings and

psalms, hymns and chants, some of which go back to most ancient times. The morning service proper commences with a series of benedictions (Birchot ha-Shahar), referring to the change from night to day and from sleep to wakefulness, followed by reflections of gratitude to God and adoration of His holy name, and by Scriptural and Rabbinic selections pertaining to the Temple service, for which prayer is to serve as a substitute. Then comes a series of psalms (Mizmorim) and hymns, concluding with the Song of Moses. In this place, additional psalms are inserted on Sabbaths and holidays. These psalms and hymns are preceded by a benediction (Baruch she-Amar) and followed by a benediction (Yishtabah). Then follow the Shema' with its accompanying blessings and the Shemoneh 'Esreh. The service is concluded with a short supplication (considerably lengthened on Mondays and Thursdays) for Israel in exile and a collection of verses expressive of the great hope for the future redemption. The glorious Messianic hymn, 'Alenu, is recited at the end of every service. Corresponding to the songs of the Levites in the Temple service, a different psalm is recited every day of the week, with which the service concludes. Some read additional scriptural selections, such as the Ten Commandments, the chapter of the Manna, etc., but these are not regarded as part of the service.

Piyyutim, Selihot, Kinot.—The elements of the Jewish public service hitherto enumerated are to a large extent the same as were adopted when the prayer book was first compiled and these have found general acceptance. There is also another group of prayers, the "Piyyutim" or poetical compositions, which are of later origin and have found only partial

acceptance. These vary greatly in content, as well as in their poetic and devotional value. Some of them are the compositions of some of the greatest medieval Jewish poets, as Jehudah Halevi, Solomon ibn Gebirol and others, while others are the works of mediocre writers whose only virtue was their fine religious zeal and their thorough familiarity with Jewish literature. The "Piyyutim" found their place chiefly in the services of the Festivals and of some of the more important Sabbaths. While originally intended merely as temporary additions, each reader having been given the liberty of inserting such compositions as pleased his fancy, many of them were later incorporated into the prayer book for the holidays (Mahzor-cycle of prayers) and became fixed in the liturgy. The recitation of these, however, has never been regarded as obligatory and some Rabbis even strongly objected to the "Piyyutim" on the ground that they interrupted the service and unduly prolonged it. In modern times, only a few of these, especially those designed for the New Year and the Day of Atonement, are still read in the service.

A special kind of "Piyyutim" are the penitential hymns (Selihot) recited before dawn during the period beginning with the week before New Year and extending to the Day of Atonement and also during the services on fast days. These are mainly prayers for the forgiveness of sin and supplications for redemption from the bondage of exile.

The special elegies for the destruction of the Temple and of the national independence, recited on the Fast of Ab, are known as "Kinot" (Lamentations). Some of these are of a highly poetical quality, especially the Zionides recited at the close of the morning services. Both these and the Selihot are

usually published in separate volumes and are not included in the regular prayer book.

RÉSUMÉ

The Jewish Prayer Book is designed primarily for public worship. However, it was never meant to be exclusive. Alongside of the regular prayers therein included, other prayers might be added by the individual worshipper, which best suit his requirements. The insertion of additional prayers by individuals is not only permitted, but expected and encouraged.

The Jewish liturgy consists mainly of prayers of adoration and thanksgiving. Even the supplications are mostly such as ask for spiritual and intellectual advancement, for national and communal well-being rather than for individual and material things. A large portion of our liturgy is made up of prayers for the approach of the Messianic period, when justice and righteousness will be established on earth and universal peace will reign supreme, when Israel will be restored to his ancient patrimony and the knowledge of God and of an exalted morality will fill the earth. The prayers for material prosperity are but few in number and are given but little prominence.

The main elements of the Jewish Prayer Book are the "Shema'," the Jewish confession of faith, and the "Shemoneh 'Esreh," containing the petitions offered in the spirit just mentioned. Around these as the centre is grouped a number of hymns and psalms. The "Kaddish" is a doxology, found in various forms in the prayer book. It is recited, in one form, by mourners, who show by this act their faith in God and their resignation to His will in

times of greatest trial. The more prevalent reason assigned for the mourners' Kaddish is the belief that it has a saving power and might affect the fate of the deceased in the future world. The merit of the parent who has succeeded in rearing a child in piety and moral conduct is recalled when the child proclaims the greatness and glory of God at public worship.

The reading from the Torah and from the Prophets during public service has always been an integral part of Jewish worship. The divisions of the Pentateuch in accordance with the annual cycle of reading is the most prevalent. Indeed, many Jews would date their letters and other correspondence by mentioning the sidra of the week, since the days of the week have no special names in Hebrew. Thus, the first day of Bereshit would stand for the Sunday of the week on the Sabbath of which the first portion of Genesis is read in the synagogue. To be called up to the reading of a portion of the law has always been regarded as a great honor. The "Bar Mizwah" boy is first introduced as a full-fledged member of the community by being invited to read a portion of the sidra. The bridegroom is also distinguished by a similar honor.

Among the many "Piyyutim" "Selihot" and "Kinot" there are quite a number that possess high devotional value and exquisite poetical worth. Others are of inferior quality. Many of these are still retained in the liturgy, while custom differs greatly as to the use to be made of them in the service.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the general characteristic of the Jewish Prayer Book?

2. Name and describe the two chief elements of the Jewish liturgy.

3. Define Kaddish and explain its use in the service.

4. Explain the term sidra and mention the different systems of reading from the Law.

5. According to what principle was the Haftarah selected? What reason is assigned for the reading of the Haftarah?

6. Give a brief summary of the daily morning service, mentioning its chief component elements.

7. Describe the use of "Piyyutim" in Jewish service. What is meant by that term? What are "Selihot?" "Kinot?"

8. Define briefly the following Hebrew terms: 'Aliyah, Hazzan, Kedushah, Ba'al Kore, Maftir.

XII. PRIVATE DEVOTION AND HOME CEREMONIES

The Value of Prayer.—Prayer, whether in the form of benediction or supplication, is a natural impulse of the human soul. We long to come into communion with God, our Father; to give thanks to Him for the blessings that we enjoy; to sing His praises and exalt His qualities as we, in our limited knowledge, understand them; and to lay our needs and desires before Him. Our conception of God as a merciful Father, who takes interest in our lives, who guides our destinies and is ever near to us, begets a desire on our part to come ever nearer to Him, to approach more closely to the Author of our being. This desire finds its concrete expression in prayer. While engaged in prayer, the divine that is within us asserts itself; our thoughts and emotions become purified; all coarseness and all evil are forgotten, because of the realization that we stand before God, the Source of all holiness, the Fountain of purity. Prayer is the effort of the divine within us to express itself in its relation to the divine in the universe. The more often the opportunity is given for such an expression and the more fully its import is comprehended, the stronger will be the hold of the divine upon our lives, the purer will our souls become, the holier we shall be, "even as the Lord, our God, is holy."

That God is pleased to listen to our prayers is frequently reiterated in the Bible. Not that He needs our praises or has to be reminded of our wants, but because He wishes us to be pure and

holy, a state best attained through prayer. Prayer affects not God, but ourselves. Through its effect upon us, however, it may also cause a change in God's attitude toward us. The efficacy of prayer, in which we believe, is no contradiction to the highest and most exalted conception that we may have of the deity. God's decrees are indeed unchangeable, if the conditions that prompted them remain unchanged. When we cause a change in these conditions, by improving our lives and thereby becoming more worthy of God's blessing, God's decrees are likely to change in our favor. With our finite minds and limited understanding, we are unable to know exactly what will be good for us and what not. We must rely upon God's inscrutable wisdom to decide what is best for us. Our part consists in making ourselves deserving of His goodness and grace. Prayer is thus efficacious in itself. It helps to transform us and in this way makes us worthy to receive the blessing sought or to escape the misfortune that is imminent.

This is the sense in which we are to understand this fundamental institution of all religions. The natural yearning of the human soul is to *tell* God what it feels in relation to Him. Prayer is the form in which this natural craving finds its expression. Besides the satisfaction and relief it offers to the one seeking communion with God, it has in itself the power of ennobling life and purifying the soul. Thus ennobled and thus purified, we become more worthy of His blessings, more deserving of His loving care and protection. Our praises and our supplications cannot affect God's being; but they have an effect on us and through this, affect God's relations to us. We do not believe in a God who is distant and stern, acting by immutable laws and having no regard for

our interests and well-being. Our God is a God of mercy and kindness, who is full of compassion, desiring our improvement and betterment. When we make the effort to return to Him, to banish from our hearts all evil, to purify our desires and our emotions, He is ready to accept us and to assist us with His guidance. A whole-hearted prayer is one form in which such an effort becomes manifest, indeed, a whole-hearted prayer is in itself a process of such purification and bears its answer within itself.

Convinced of the infinite power and goodness of God, we ask of Him to grant our wishes; to remove from us danger and sickness; to guide us aright and protect us from all evil. This is our chief refuge in times of perplexity and doubt, our great consolation in times of trouble and misfortune. It is the very sustenance of our spiritual lives. We pray and hope that our prayer will be granted. We pray all the time being conscious that God is waiting for our repentance and ready to assist us in our effort to reach to holiness and perfection. Our immediate desires may not be granted, for God in His wisdom may regard their fulfillment baneful to us or to others, but the object of our prayer is attained. We have become better and God's justice, always tempered with mercy, will mete out to us the reward in accordance with our deserts. Many of the supplications in our prayer book begin with the words "May it be Thy will, O Lord, our God." We hope that our desires may coincide with God's will, but we also realize that God's will is more beneficent and more in accordance with the highest wisdom than our desires. By the act of prayer we become more prepared and more qualified to have God's will inclined toward our individual wants. Thus we pray because we are naturally moved to do so, because through praying

our lives become improved and because we believe that when our lives are nobler and holier we may be more deserving of God's bounty and protection. (Read carefully Friedlander, "The Jewish Religion," pp. 183-189, especially the quotation from Albo's "Ikkarim" on pp. 188-9; Joseph, "Judaism as Creed and Life," pp. 257-273.)

Private Devotion.—The real object of prayer may be attained in private devotion perhaps to a better degree than in public worship, which has also other purposes in view (see Chapter X). In private devotion the natural impulse is unrestricted and the worshipper is at liberty to expose his innermost emotions, to lay his soul bare before his Creator. Prayer then is most intense, because most natural; it reacts more quickly because it is more spontaneous. Length of prayer or its form are then of little consequence; sincerity and wholeheartedness on the part of the worshipper are what count most. Private devotion not only helps to purify the soul of the worshipper and ennoble his life, but it also hallows the atmosphere of the home where such prayers are offered. No one can think evil thoughts, use indecent language or do unseemly acts in the presence of one engaged in a devout and sincere prayer. The magnetic effect of the pronunciation of a wholehearted prayer upon those who are within its hearing can hardly be overestimated. Voices are hushed, thoughts are chastened and the very air becomes surcharged with sanctity. A home in which prayers are recited at regular intervals is a home sanctified by the spirit of God, a home where chastity, purity and the higher, divine life hold sway.

Our Rabbis fully realized the great value of private devotion for the true religious life and made

ample provision for it. If unable to attend synagogue regularly, one may repeat all the prayers of the liturgy, with but few exceptions, in the privacy of one's home. Realizing the important psychological principle that emotions become more abiding only through exercise and practice, the Rabbis enjoin that children should be taught to pray from their very infancy. As soon as the infant is able to articulate words, he should be taught some simple prayers, such as the Shema' or the verse: "Moses commanded us a law, an inheritance of the congregation of Jacob" (Deuteronomy 33:4). The child should be constantly made to feel his dependence upon God and taught to express this feeling in words of praise or thanksgiving. In the many religious customs and observances of the year, special care is taken to give the child a place in their performance, thus helping in the healthy growth of his religious feelings and emotions.

Besides the spontaneous prayers that every individual might utter on certain occasions of joy or sorrow or when the spirit moves him, our Rabbis indicated the occasions when such prayers should be recited, and, in most cases, even suggested the form which these should assume.

Benedictions.—"It is unlawful for man to enjoy anything in this world without previously pronouncing a benediction (Berachah)," is a general rule laid down by our Rabbis. We should always be conscious of the fact that all the blessings that we enjoy are vouchsafed to us by God, the Source of all goodness, and acknowledge this by words of gratitude and praise. Special blessings have thus been fixed for all the various enjoyments that we may experience in life. These benedictions usually begin

with the words: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe," and conclude with a reference to the special object of enjoyment, whether it be in the form of eating and drinking, a pleasing sight or an agreeable smell. Before the performance of a certain religious act, the initial words given above are amplified as follows: "Who sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to," concluding with a reference to the particular act (Mizwah) about to be done. Cherishing the distinction of being God's chosen people, to whom He revealed His Law, the Jew lost no opportunity to offer thanks for the distinction and obligation thus conferred upon him. The fulfillment of a Mizwah is regarded as a source of great joy, the opportunity to obey God's commands a peculiar delight. Therefore thanks are offered in the blessing preceding the fulfillment of every such duty.

Characteristic of their strong faith in God and their complete resignation to His will, the Rabbis ordained that a special blessing be offered on hearing an evil report as well as on hearing a good report. In the latter case, the blessing concludes with the words "Who art good and dispensest good," while in the former it ends simply with the words "the true Judge." He knows best and His judgment we accept with resignation and thank Him for it, knowing that no positive evil can ever proceed from Him. (For the special benedictions to be recited on certain occasions, see Singer's Prayer Book, pp. 287-292).

Grace After Meals.—Special significance is attached to the blessing to be recited after partaking of a regular meal. Basing themselves on the verse "And thou shalt eat and be satisfied, and bless the

Lord thy God for the good land which He hath given thee" (Deuteronomy 8:10), the Rabbis regard the prayer after meals as a Biblical injunction and therefore attach particular importance to it. In its present form, the blessing after meals consists of four paragraphs. In the first paragraph thanks are offered to God for giving sustenance to all His creatures. In the second paragraph thanks are offered to God for the blessings vouchsafed to the people of Israel, such as Palestine and the Torah. On Hanukkah and Purim the special prayer Al ha-Nissim is inserted in the second paragraph. The third paragraph is a prayer for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the restoration of the Davidic dynasty and of the Temple service. On Sabbaths and holidays, additional prayers, pertaining to the character of the day, are inserted in this paragraph. The fourth paragraph is a later addition and refers especially to the relief obtained by the Jews after the Hadrianic persecutions. This paragraph concludes with a series of short prayers, beginning with ha-Rahaman (The Merciful One), which are still later additions. Still further additions are made on the occasion of a festival meal, especially at the feast following the ceremony of circumcision. At a wedding feast, the seven blessings recited at the ceremony are repeated after the grace after the meal.

Shorter forms of this prayer are provided for special occasions. The shortest form is that taught to children: "Blessed be the Merciful One, King of the Universe, Master of this bread." An abstract of the grace is recited after partaking of a shorter repast, as after eating cake, or fruit for which Palestine is famed, or after drinking wine. A still shorter form is read after drinking water or eating vegetables, or ordinary fruit. (See Dembitz, "Jew-

ish Services in Synagogue and Home," pp. 339-345; Friedlander, "The Jewish Religion," pp. 442-4, and the various prayer books.)

Night Prayer.—Besides the regular evening service ('Arbit), a special prayer is recited before retiring for the night. The chief element of this prayer is the repetition of the first section of the Shema' (hence its name, Keriat Shema' al ha-Mittah—the reading of the Shema' on going to bed) with a benediction asking for peace and protection during the night. Several appropriate psalms and excerpts from the regular evening service are added and the prayer concludes with the well-known hymn Adon 'Olam (Master of the Universe). Shorter forms of this are provided for young children (Singer Prayer Book, pp. 293-297, 329; Dembitz l. c. pp. 335-7).

Morning Prayer.—On rising in the morning it is customary to recite a prayer of gratitude to God for His having restored life and vigor after a night's rest. The morning ablution, which is enjoined by Jewish law, is also accompanied with a benediction. Immediately upon this follows a benediction for the gift of the Torah and a prayer that its study may not depart from us or from our descendants. This is followed by the priestly benediction and two selections from the Mishnah after which a noble prayer (Elohai Neshamah), referring to God as the author of our being and the dispenser of life, is read. These prayers are offered at home before the regular morning service (Shaharit), although they may be repeated also during the regular service in the synagogue.

For young children, a briefer form is provided, consisting of short verses from the Scriptures, ex-

pressive of faith in God and hope for His blessings.

The home services connected with the observance of the Sabbath and of the holidays have been treated under those heads and should be again rehearsed at this juncture, both for the sake of completeness and also as a means of review. Some other special home prayers will be treated in the following chapter.

RÉSUMÉ

We would pray, even if we were not enjoined to do so. Just as we are anxious to give expression in words to our feeling of love and affection for our parents, so we long to express our adoration for God. We look up to God as our kind Father and we wish to tell Him of our devotion, to sing His praises and to lay our needs and desires before Him. When we are in trouble or danger, we pour out our hearts to God and we feel relieved, assured of His protection and help. When we experience a great joy, we yearn to express our gratitude to Him, the Dispenser of all blessings. In times of darkness and despair, as well as in times of light and cheer, we feel impelled to turn to God with prayers of thanksgiving or supplication.

Besides satisfying a natural craving, prayer also has a purifying influence upon the worshipper. The consciousness of being near to God, of standing in the presence of the source of holiness and purity, cannot but move us to banish all evil thoughts, all unholy desires from our soul, to cleanse ourselves and endeavor to become purer and nobler. Prayer thus becomes a most potent stimulus to the higher, spiritual life.

Chastened and sanctified through prayer, our

faith strengthened and our emotions purified through the consciousness of our nearness to God, we may rightly expect that God will answer our petitions and grant our desires. Even His decrees might be changed through the change that prayer has wrought in us. This is the blessed consolation that prayer offers to us. This is the great hope it extends to us. It first affects us and thus makes us better qualified for and more deserving of God's mercy and protection.

We must, however, always think of the limitations of our minds and of God's infinite knowledge and wisdom. A prayer that remains unanswered may often prove a greater blessing than if it were granted. His ways are inscrutable and we are not always able to understand them. The unfailing characteristic of all our prayers should be perfect submission to God's will and perfect faith in His wisdom.

In private devotion, the object of prayer may be realized perhaps more completely than in public worship. All reserve is removed when man is alone with his Maker and the effect on the soul of the worshipper is more immediate. Private devotion in the home has a powerful influence on the moral and religious development of the family circle. Judaism recognized its value and made ample provision for it.

The habit of prayer should be cultivated and nurtured. Children should be taught to pray if we would have them grow up under the blessed influence of religion. It is never too early to begin such training. Even when the import of the prayer is not fully understood, the mere recital of it and the realization of its general meaning has a beneficent effect upon the soul.

Besides the regular services, our Rabbis provided special prayers for all occasions of life, to be read at home.

QUESTIONS

1. Illustrate by examples from every-day life the naturalness of prayer.

2. What effect has prayer upon the worshipper?

3. How may it affect God's relation to us? Explain the meaning of "efficacy of prayer."

4. What influence may be exerted by private devotion on the home and the family?

5. What is the general rule governing benedictions?

6. Why should a blessing be pronounced before the performance of a religious act? Illustrate.

7. Give a description of the contents of Grace after Meals. Why is special importance attached to it?

8. Give the elements of the prayer before retiring and of the various prayers on arising in the morning.

XIII. SYMBOLS AND RITES

Purpose of Symbols.—A symbol is some concrete object that represents or suggests an idea. It may have within itself a representation of the idea, or as is more often the case, it may suggest the idea simply because it was associated with it for a certain time. Thus we find that the same idea is expressed by different symbols and also that one symbol may suggest different ideas to different people. The immediate meaning of the symbol is given to it when it is first adopted, but its suggestiveness grows and expands in the course of time. Its immediate purpose is to serve as a sign, an emblem of a certain idea. Having served as such for a long period, the symbol gathers additional significance and importance, through the associations that have grown up around it in the life of the people that cherished it. If the fathers of this country had adopted a flag of different color and design, it would probably represent to us the same ideals and stir our emotions to as high a pitch of patriotic enthusiasm. But since they have adopted particular colors and a special design, we would sacrifice much rather than permit a change in the arrangement of a star or in the relative size and color of a stripe in the flag of our land. Conventional at the beginning, the symbol gathered significance and importance in the course of time, until it has come to assume in our eyes an intrinsic value, yes, an intrinsic sanctity.

Symbols are thus signs pointing to a reality beyond themselves. They are index fingers pointing

to great truths and ideals of which we should always be conscious. They ever keep these realities before our eyes, so that we may always be mindful of them and allow them to influence our actions and our lives. All human institutions recognize the value of these symbols and make constant use of them. The family, the state, all military and civil organizations of society employ symbols, in one form or another, to emphasize and keep ever green the memory of the ideas that each wishes to preserve and to foster. It is a tacit admission of our weakness, of our inability to retain abstractions for any length of time, and of our need for concrete reminders which should help to preserve certain truths and cause them to exert an active influence on our lives.

Religious Symbols.—Religious beliefs and ideas pertaining as they do to the relations between man and God (the most abstract of all relationships) must rely on symbols and signs even to a greater extent than purely human institutions and relations. No matter how cultured and wise we may be, with whatever readiness and ease we may speak of such subjects as eternity and infinity, we are nevertheless unable to free ourselves entirely from the material, and are, therefore, unable to dispense with the material. Our religious sense may be ever so highly developed, it still needs frequent suggestions and reminders to keep the religious truths ever before us. If patriotism still needs the symbol of the flag to keep it alive; if nuptial relationship still needs the reminder of the ring to rouse the emotions of love and fidelity; if devotion to a cause still requires the suggestion of a pin or a charm to fan our enthusiasm for it and keep ablaze our devotion to

it; God and holiness, more abstract and more removed from the ordinary daily routine of life, certainly need concrete and tangible reminders in order to become deciding factors in life. The voice of conscience may become hushed by the din and clamor of the world around us; "the beauty of holiness" may become blurred and dimmed because of the glare and dazzle of worldly allurements; the call of duty and of God may remain unheeded, unless we are constantly kept conscious of these by some concrete emblem or symbol.

Judaism recognized this truth and provided signs and symbols to serve as reminders of the great ideals and principles it wished us to adopt and follow. These symbols, whatever their origin and primitive significance, having served for so many centuries to represent religious ideas and sacred relationships, have themselves become pregnant with meaning for us, not only because of the ideas that they are intended to suggest, but also because of the holy associations which they have gathered around themselves in the course of time. They are guiding posts to eternal realities. They are the inspirers to noble ideals which we cherish. Having served the cause of holiness and of duty for so many centuries to our ancestors, the Jewish symbols have endeared themselves to us and have assumed intrinsic value and importance.

In this spirit we take up the consideration of several of the leading symbols which have enjoyed universal acceptance among Jews for many centuries. There are many other symbols and rites connected with the great crises in life, as birth, marriage and death, which need not, however, be explained to children, although the teacher should know all these and be familiar with the manner of

their observance (see Appendix to this book; also Dr. Rosenau's "Jewish Ceremonial Institutions and Customs" will be very helpful in such a study; cf. also Friedlander," "The Jewish Religion," pp. 467-496, and the Jewish Encyclopedia). In presenting the lesson to children, the teacher should exhibit the symbols, such as Tallit, Tefillin, Mezuzah, which will be helpful to a better comprehension of the subject.

Zizit.—The Commandment to wear fringes (Zizit) on the four corners of the garment (Deuteronomy 22:12), is amplified in another place by the following explanatory remark: "That ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them; and that ye go not about after (the inclination of) your own heart and (the delight of) your own eyes, in pursuance of which ye used to go astray; that ye may remember and do all My commandments, and be holy unto your God." (Numbers 15:37-41.) The symbol of Zizit is thus intended to serve as a reminder to the Jew of the very purpose of his existence—to be a holy nation unto his God. By observing this commandment faithfully, we shall be led to do all the commandments of the Lord and we shall be protected against temptation. It points to sanctification—the final aim of life, and also suggests the best means of obtaining that aim—viz., the observance of God's laws and precepts.

While the commandment itself is not now observed literally, the fringes are still worn by observant Jews on a special garment beneath their upper garments. Here the teacher may show these symbols, while explaining as follows: This small garment is called Tallit Katan (small garment) or

Arba' Kanfot (Four corners). A larger garment (Tallit) of a similar kind is also worn over all other garments during the morning service. These garments are provided with fringes on each of their four corners. Each fringe consists of four long threads, drawn through a small hole at the corner with both ends tied together by a double knot. One of the threads (Shammash-servant), much longer than the others, is then wound about the others seven, eight, eleven and thirteen times, a double knot being made after each set of windings. Thus, each fringe presents four sections, separated by double knots, and consists of eight half threads made by doubling the original four threads.

According to the Biblical injunction (Numbers 15: 38), one of the threads should be of purple-blue wool (Techelet). This, however, is no more required, because of the difficulty of obtaining the particular shade of blue. The threads are usually white.

When putting on the small Tallit, a blessing is pronounced, concluding with the words "concerning the commandment of Zizit." When the large Tallit is put on, the blessing to be said concludes with the words "to wrap ourselves with a fringed garment." (Friedlander, l. c., pp. 329-331; Rosenau, l. c., pp. 59-65; Dembitz, l. c., pp. 312-3; Jewish Encyclopedia, s. v. Fringes.)

Tefillin.—A set of Tefillin should be in the hands of the teacher and shown to the pupils while the following explanation is made:

The term "tefillin" to designate the phylacteries, worn on the left arm and forehead during prayer, is of late origin and has reference to the fact that the time of wearing them was later restricted to the period of prayer (tefillah-prayer). In

the Bible, no special name is given to the phylacteries. They are spoken of as a sign, a memorial or simply as frontlets, i.e., fillets or head-garments (totafot). The commandment regarding tefillin is repeated four times in the Torah (Exodus 13: 9, 16; Deuteronomy 4: 8; 11: 18) and their purpose is indicated to be a reminder of our duty to study God's law and obey it, that we should always be mindful of God as the Redeemer of Israel and follow the statutes and laws which He commanded us. A more poetic interpretation of the purpose of this symbol is given by the Rabbis, who say that the tefillin worn on the head and on the left arm, which presses on the heart, indicate that our thoughts and our emotions, our intellects and our feelings should ever be devoted to the service of God. (Cf. Proverbs 1:9 and 4:9: "An ornament of grace to thy head and as a jewel about thy neck.")

The tefillin consist of two boxes (Battim-houses) made of parchment, each of which is provided with a long leather strap (Rezu'ah). One of these is worn above the forehead (Tefillah shel Rosh), fastened on the back of the head by a knot, the ends of the strap falling down in front. The other is placed on the left arm (Tefillah shel Yad), also fastened by a knot and the strap is then wound about the arm seven times, and about the middle finger of the hand. The former (placed on the brow) contains four compartments, in each of which is deposited a strip of parchment with one of the following four sections written on it: Exodus 13:1-10; 11:16; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 11:13-20. The latter (on the upper left arm) contains only one compartment, into which is deposited a long strip of parchment with all the above sections written on it.

Originally, the tefillin were worn the whole day.

At present, however, the custom is to wear them only during the morning service of the week-days. On Sabbaths and holidays the tefillin are not worn, since these days are in themselves regarded as a symbol of the covenant between God and Israel. The Tefillah shel Yad is first placed on the arm, while the blessing concluding with the words "to lay tefillin" is recited. Then the Tefillah shel Rosh is fastened to the forehead and another blessing, concluding with the words "concerning the commandment of tefillin," is said. The reverse order is followed when the tefillin are taken off.

According to Jewish law, a boy attains his religious majority at the age of thirteen, when he becomes a member of the Jewish community (Bar Mizwah—Son of the Commandment), obliged to follow the customs and institutions of Judaism. From this day on, he is held responsible for his actions. On the Sabbath succeeding his thirteenth birthday, the boy is called up to the reading of the Torah in the synagogue and is often permitted to read the section as well as the Haftarah. The occasion is frequently marked by a feast prepared for the boy by his parents, when the boy is taught to deliver an appropriate address. The wearing of tefillin is made compulsory only after one has attained his religious majority. Before this period is reached, the boy is not presumed to be able to maintain the proper degree of earnestness and piety of mind necessary for the observance of this ceremony, and is consequently exempted from wearing Tefillin. A few weeks before his thirteenth birthday, the boy is trained in the manner in which the tefillin should be put on and taught all the laws pertaining thereto. (For the change to the more modern form of Confirmation, see the Chapter on Shabuot; comp. Rose-

nau, l. c., pp. 149-154; Berkowitz, "The New Education in Religion," Lesson VIII.)

The obligation to wear tefillin and zizit applies only to men and not to women. This is due to the general maxim of the Jewish law that women are released from the obligation to observe all positive commandments, which are restricted in their performances to a certain definite time. The reason for this is obvious. Religious acts which must be performed at a certain set time may interfere with the homely duties, which are considered to be the primary occupation of women, or with their physical nature, hence they were exempt from the obligation of performing such acts. (Rosenau, l. c., pp. 50-59; Dembitz, l. c., pp. 312-317; Friedlander, l. c., pp. 331-4, 338; Jewish Encyclopedia s. v. Phylacteries.)

Mezuzah.—Let the Mezuzah be seen and handled by the child while the explanations are offered.

The mezuzah (literally, door-post) is a tin or glass case fixed on to the right hand door post of the outer entrance, frequently also on that of the entrance of every room of a Jewish house. The case contains a strip of parchment upon which are inscribed the first two sections of the Shema' (Deuteronomy 6: 4-9; 11:13-20). The last verses in each of these sections contain the ordinance regarding the mezuzah. The word Shaddai (Almighty), written on the back of the parchment, is made visible by means of a small opening in the case. Pious Israelites, on entering a room or on leaving it, touch the mezuzah reverently with their fingers and then kiss the tips of their fingers, as a mark of respect. When the mezuzah is first affixed, a benediction is recited.

The mezuzah is the symbol of God's watchful care over the house and its dwellers. The home

thus becomes sanctified by the consciousness of God's continuous presence in its midst.

The Rabbis say: "He who has tefillin upon his head and upon his arm, zizit on his garments and a mezuzah on the door of his house, is safe from sin, since he has many reminders of his duties. These are furthermore the angels that protect him from going astray." (Rosenau, l. c., pp. 105-112; Friedlander, l. c., pp. 335; Jewish Encyclopedia, s. v. Mezuzah.)

The Covenant of Abraham.—The rite of circumcision is also frequently designated as the Covenant of Abraham, since it was to Abraham that the commandment was first given (Genesis 17: 9-14, repeated in Leviticus 12:3). On the eighth day after his birth, every male child is to undergo the operation of circumcision. This obligation rests upon the father of the child, who accordingly recites an appropriate blessing before the operation is performed. It is probable that at one time the operation was performed by the mother (comp. Exodus 4:25). At present, however, the operation is entrusted only to a skilled expert (Mohel), who also pronounces a blessing. After the operation is performed the Mohel reads a prayer for the child, in which the child is formally named for the first time. A feast is usually served to all the assembled guests. In some communities, this rite is performed in the synagogue after the morning service.

Proselytes who wish to join the Jewish community also undergo the operation of circumcision.

The rite of circumcision is the symbol of the covenant that exists between Israel and God. The covenant made by God with Abraham was to be an everlasting covenant, by which the descendants of

Abraham become distinguished from all other nations of the earth. The Jewish infant is thus initiated into this covenant by the rite of circumcision, which serves as a constant reminder to him of his descent and of his allegiance. This institution has been most faithfully observed by Jews throughout all the centuries of their existence. They braved dire persecution and even death itself rather than forego this rite. At the present time, even such Jews as are not careful about the observance of many another Jewish institution, still observe this ceremony most carefully. (Friedlander, l. c., pp. 336, 477-8; Rosenau, l. c., 132-142.)

Girls are first named in the synagogue, when the father is called up to the reading of a section of the Law. The reader then recites a special prayer for the new-born girl, mentioning her by name, and for her mother. Some defer the naming of a girl until the mother is able to attend synagogue herself.

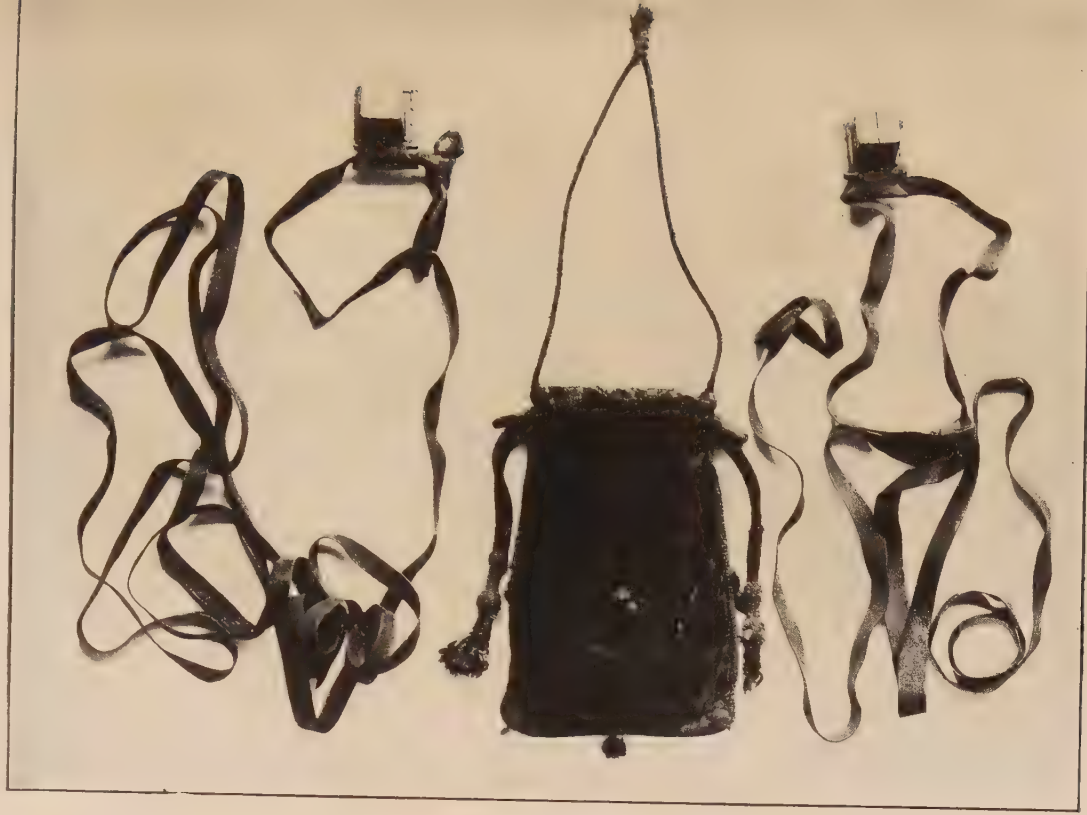
(NOTE:—In this connection it is well to consider another ceremony. It is "The Redemption of the First-born." The ceremony of the Redemption of the first-born (Pidyon ha-Ben) has its origin in the commandment contained in Exodus 13:13 and Numbers 18:16. The theory was that the first-born boy should be devoted to the service of God and that the priests, the descendants of Aaron, who were selected to do that service, were acting merely in the place of the first-born. In order to free the first-born from this service, it is necessary that he be redeemed and the redemption money, amounting to five shekels, paid over to the Kohen (priest). This ceremony is observed to the present day at the completion of the first thirty days of the life of the first-born male child. (See Singer Prayer Book, pp.

308-9 for the service at such a ceremony; Rosenau, l. c., pp. 143-47.)

RÉSUMÉ

The archeologist or ethnologist may indulge in speculation about the origin of certain religious symbols and build his theories upon them. Such investigations are extremely interesting and may even lead to valuable discoveries in the domain of history and anthropology. The religious teacher, however, should avoid such discussions in the classroom, for they are entirely irrelevant to the present observance of such symbols and ceremonies. What concerns him mostly is what a certain symbol meant and still means to the great majority of the Jews. He should know and explain the relative position of the symbol in the practice of Judaism, the influence it exerted upon Jews of all times and the reverence in which it is held today. Jewish symbols, while in the main conventional (as most other symbols are), always suggested certain important ideas to our people, ideas which we of today also cherish and wish to preserve. These ideas have in the course of time become so intimately associated and bound up with concrete symbols that the separation between them may do injury to the preservation of the ideas and to the influence they are supposed to exert on our lives and habits.

There is also the filial sentiment that should not be overlooked in dealing with symbols. A practice followed by a certain family or group for many centuries assumes added value and significance to the members of that group, by the very reason of its becoming part of their lives. Such a practice becomes in itself of importance and helps greatly in



PHYLACTERIES (TEFILLIN) AND BAG

the preservation of the separate identity of the people that observe it.

The four institutions of Judaism usually classed as symbols are: Zizit, Tefillin, Mezuzah and the Abrahamic Covenant. All of these are suggestive of high ideals and noble truths that lie at the very foundation of the Jewish religion. Besides this, they are also important aids in maintaining the separateness of the Jews and their distinct mission. They emphasize the ideals of holiness and purity, of the part of the divine in human affairs, of "the beauty of holiness" and the means of attaining to it. Having been observed by Jews for so many centuries and having been associated in their minds with these exalted truths all the time, they have gathered additional importance—aye, additional sanctity, because they are part of our patrimony and thereby keep us ever cognizant of our nature and our destiny. By their observance, we become distinguished as Jews and reminded of our duty to preserve our individuality and distinctive character. Another institution that is intended primarily to preserve Jewish separatism will be discussed in the next chapter.

QUESTIONS

1. Explain the purpose of a symbol and its value. Give examples from ordinary life.

2. Why does religion, more than other institutions, need symbols?

3. What double value has every Jewish symbol? Illustrate.

4. Define Zizit, giving details. What is its purpose?

5. Give the purpose of Tefillin. Describe the Tefillin and the manner in which they are worn.

6. What is a Mezuzah? Describe and give its purpose.

7. What commandments are not obligatory upon women? Why?

8. What is Bar Mizwah? Why do we associate Tefillin with the Bar Mizwah?

9. What is meant by the Abrahamic Covenant? Why is it so called? Describe the ceremony attending it.

10. What is the reason for the ceremony of the Redemption of the First-born?

XIV. THE DIETARY LAWS—JEWISH SEPARATISM

The Purpose.—While holiness, implying both consecration and racial distinctiveness, is the purpose of many of the ceremonial institutions of Judaism, it is especially and repeatedly emphasized in connection with the dietary laws. "And ye shall be holy unto Me; for I the Lord am holy, and have set you apart from the people, and ye should be Mine." (Leviticus 20:26.) This is the reason given for the numerous enactments regarding food found in the Bible, whatever other purposes may have been served by several individual provisions of these laws.

The danger of becoming assimilated and absorbed by the great majority was felt even when the Jews still maintained a separate political existence and were isolated in a state of their own. It was even foreseen at the very threshold of our history, when Abraham insisted that his son marry only in his own family (Genesis 24: 3, 8), and when Rebekkah sent Jacob to her own folks to find a wife for himself (Ib. 27: 46; 28: 1-9). Since then the apprehension of becoming lost in the world has served as a stimulus to many enactments, was the theme of many an impassioned prophecy and proved the cause of many of the laws and provisions of the Rabbis. If we would remain loyal to our traditions, faithful to the sacred trust imposed upon us, and prepared to carry on God's work in the world, we must keep ourselves distinct and separate from

all other peoples. Israel among the nations has been able to maintain himself and to preserve his identity during all these centuries mainly because of these laws and regulations by which his identity was safeguarded.

There is nothing more conducive to intimacy among people than a common table. By eating and drinking together, the conventional restraints become relaxed, familiarity is promoted and close friendships may be the result. In the phraseology of the Rabbis, "we should not eat their bread because we may be led thereby to drink their wine; we should not drink their wine because we may be led thereby to intermarry with them and intermarriage will lead us to serve their gods." In obeying the dietary laws, the Jew made himself immune from the dangers of assimilation; because of their constant application in life, he was kept mindful of his distinctive nature and destiny. With his keenly developed instinct of self-preservation, the Jew always observed these laws zealously and adhered to them most rigidly, feeling their tremendous influence on his life, on his survival as a distinct people.

The separateness of Israel, however, is not meant to be an end in itself. Israel is to be preserved as a distinct people because of the ideals it fosters, because of its attitude to the eternal realities of life, because it has an important function in the world. It is conceivable to have an entirely secular Jewish nation, established in Palestine or elsewhere, working out its destinies in the same manner as other nations do. Such a survival, however, will not serve God's purpose for Israel, the purpose expressed in the revelation handed down to us and in the course of our history. Israel is to be preserved as the holy

people, as the people consecrated to the service of the highest religious and ethical ideals, as the banner-bearer of the great truths which it has so jealously preserved throughout the many generations of its history. This peculiar nature of Israel, this exalted destiny of our people is also served by the numerous regulations regarding food prescribed by our religion. By abstaining from certain kinds of food, we emphasize the spiritual and the divine that is within us. By suppressing sensuous desires and appetites, we give prominence to the idea of the sacredness of life. In partaking of food, intended to sustain our physical selves, we are reminded by these laws and regulations that the physical is only important in so far as the spirit is maintained thereby, that even then our thoughts must not be diverted from the real aim of life—the consecration of self. The self-abnegation demanded of the Jew by these injunctions, making him feel distinct and different from all other peoples, at the same time emphasized to him the purpose for which he is to be different. Thus through obedience to the dietary laws we help to maintain our personal holiness and our racial distinctiveness, the two ideas contained in the Hebrew term "Kadosh," the express purpose of all these regulations.

Effects of Their Observance.—The effects of the observance of these dietary laws both upon the physical and moral nature of the Jewish people have been recognized by all students of history. Moderation in food, the ability to suppress the craving for certain things, the submission to the numerous restrictions for the sake of a high ideal, could not but influence character, develop self-control and harden the powers of endurance. Laws that bid

self-mastery and demand curbing of sensuous desires for the sake of duty and in obedience to the divine will, must exert a tremendous influence on a people that has observed them for many centuries. The moral fibre becomes toughened, and the power of adaptability to all kinds of conditions and circumstances becomes developed, through the rigorous discipline which these laws impose.

Many of these laws also tend towards developing the finer traits of tenderness and kindness to all of God's creatures. Cruelty to animals was regarded with horror by the Jews of all generations, and many of the injunctions in the Bible and the sayings of the Rabbis enjoin consideration for the lower creatures. Several of the dietary laws obviously aim at sparing the animal any unnecessary pain or discomfort. Many modern scientists have repeatedly declared the Jewish mode of slaughtering animals to be the most humane. (Read Joseph, "Judaism as Creed and Life," pp. 354-359; Richman & Lehman, "Methods of Teaching Jewish Ethics," pp. 213-230; Dembo, "The Jewish Method of Slaughtering Animals"; Jewish Encyclopedia s. v. "Cruelty to Animals.") It may be advisable for the teacher to elaborate upon this theme in this connection.

It has also frequently been demonstrated that the observance of the dietary laws by the Jews contributed greatly to their physical efficiency and health. Many of the forbidden things are unhealthful and are regarded as injurious to health also by modern science. The fact that the Jews are immune from certain diseases and enjoy a longer life has also been explained as the result of their adherence to these laws. It is not impossible that some of these laws were enjoined because of their hygienic value. Still, we must be careful not to confuse this

secondary object with the general purpose of these laws, which is explicitly given to be the consecration of the Jewish people.

In the following paragraphs, the general divisions of the subject only are given. The teacher is expected to familiarize himself with the details of the law as presented in other sources. In the Jewish Encyclopedia, besides the general article on Dietary Laws, there will be found special articles on all of the more important divisions of the law, under their respective headings.

Vegetable and Animal Food.—No restriction is placed in the Bible on vegetable products and on fruit (Genesis 1: 29). The laws regulating the enjoyment of vegetable food, found in the Bible ('Orlah: Leviticus 19:23-25; Hadash: ib., 23:9-14; Kilaim: ib., 19:19; Deuteronomy 22:9, comp. ib., 22: 10-11) obviously belong to the regulations pertaining to the Temple service (comp. Exodus 23: 19).

Among the ancient Israelites, animal food was regarded as a luxury, in which the rich only might indulge. From the permission given to Noah and his children after the flood (Genesis 9: 2, 3), it seems that the general feeling was against eating animal food. This feeling may have been the basis for the system of sacrifices. Certain animals were regarded as repulsive and were considered an "abomination" (Leviticus 11:8; Deuteronomy 14: 3). The distinction between clean and unclean animals is found early in the Bible (Genesis 7: 2, 8), although definite provision for this distinction is not made until later, in the legislative portion (Leviticus 11; Deuteronomy 14: 3-21).

Clean and Unclean Animals.—Of mammals, only ten groups are mentioned as permitted for food, the general rule being "whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is wholly cloven-footed, and cheweth the cud, among the beasts, that ye may eat." The unclean birds are enumerated in two almost identical lists in Leviticus and Deuteronomy. While no general mark of recognition is given in the Bible, the Rabbis have laid down certain signs by which the unclean birds might be distinguished. In both birds and mammals, it is generally the beast or bird of prey that is prohibited, although not all the domestic animals are permitted. Fishes that have fins and scales are clean, others are not. All insects, with the exception of four kinds of locusts, are forbidden. All "creeping things," including all kinds of worms as well as the valved animals, such as oysters, clams and crabs and other crustacea, are likewise forbidden.

All products derived from the unclean animals are forbidden, as are the animals themselves. The milk of unclean mammals, the eggs of unclean birds and the roe of unclean fishes should not be used as food. The only exception to this rule is the permission to use the honey produced by bees, since this was considered as the juice of the flowers sucked by the bee and again discharged and containing no portion of the insect itself.

Shehitah.—The clean animal could be used for food only after it was killed in accordance with a prescribed form, which is called Shehitah. To cut off a limb from a living animal and eat it, was looked upon with horror by the Israelites (comp. Genesis 9:4), and the Rabbis included this prohibition among the laws that are obligatory on all mankind

(the descendants of Noah). Though not definitely prescribed in the Bible, the specific laws governing the method of slaughtering animals for food are probably of remote antiquity (Deuteronomy 12:21).

The slaughtering of animals should be entrusted only to a person who is familiar with the law and skilled in his work (Shohet). The knife must be of a certain prescribed length and must be very sharp and have no perceptible notch. Before slaughtering the knife must be carefully examined, both as to its dullness and coarseness. This is obviously intended to avoid any unnecessary pain to the animal. A special blessing is to be pronounced by the Shohet before slaughtering. The slaughtering itself consists of cutting through most of the windpipe and of the gullet. This has to be accomplished without the slightest delay and with the utmost skill.

The laws of Shehitah apply only to mammals and to birds. Fishes and locusts need not be killed in any prescribed form, although these also should not be eaten while they are still alive. In the case of birds and the permitted wild mammals, the blood that comes forth through the Shehitah has to be covered with earth or with ashes (Leviticus 17:13), when another blessing is pronounced.

The law prohibits the slaughtering of an animal and its young on the same day (ib. *22*: *28*; comp. Deuteronomy *22*: 6, *7*). This prohibition is apparently enjoined because of the cruelty involved in such an act.

Terefah.—An animal that was found to have suffered from a mortal disease, even though it was killed in the prescribed manner, may not be used for food. Such an animal was called Terefah (literally, "torn by beasts," Exodus *22*: 30), while the animal

that met its death in any other way than that of proper Shehitah was called Nebelah (Deuteronomy 14:21). The Rabbis have elaborated a whole system of laws, which determine the diseases fatal to animals and thus make them unfit for food.

After Shehitah, however, it is presumed that the animal is permitted as food (Kasher—ritually fit) and it is therefore not necessary to examine the animal to ascertain whether or not it had suffered from a disease. The only organ that must be thoroughly examined is the lungs, because there disease is frequent. This examination (Bedikah) should be performed by an expert Shohet, who is versed in all the laws of Terefah. Birds, however, need not undergo that examination, because in them lung disease is scarce.

Blood, Fat and "The Sinew That Shrank."—Blood is repeatedly prohibited in the Bible (Leviticus 17: 10-11; Deuteronomy 12:16, et al.). The meat, therefore, has to be free from blood before it can be eaten. In preparing meat for cooking, the following process is followed: The meat is first soaked in water for half an hour, then it is kept covered with salt for an hour. The meat is then rinsed and the salt removed, after which it may be cooked. The prohibition applies only to the blood of mammals or birds, not to the blood of fishes or locusts.

That part of the fat of animals which, in the case of sacrifices, was burnt upon the altar (Leviticus 3: 3, 4) is forbidden as food (ib. 7: 23-25). All other fat found in the animal or any fat of birds or permitted wild animals may be eaten.

The incident of Jacob's wrestling with the angel, which caused the patriarch's lameness, gave rise, according to the Biblical version, to the custom of

refraining from eating the sinews of the hind legs of an animal (Genesis 32:33). The hind quarters of cattle are thus forbidden as food, unless the sinews, with all the fat, muscle and tissue surrounding them have been carefully removed. This requires great skill and much labor, so that many butchers would rather dispose of these portions as Terefah than take the trouble to remove the forbidden parts.

Meat and Milk.—The thrice repeated prohibition against "seething a kid in its mother's milk" (Exodus 23: 19; 34: 26; Deuteronomy 14: 21) was interpreted to extend to all mixtures of meat and milk food. The reason for this law is not given in the Bible, although from the context we infer that it was probably intended to serve as a guard against some idolatrous practices of the time. It is also possible that this sentence is to be translated "Thou shalt not seethe a kid while still nursing," and to be considered in connection with the humane law, forbidding the separation of the kid from the dam (comp. Deuteronomy 22: 6-7). Jewish tradition, however, has always connected this verse with the widely spread custom of abstaining from eating meat and milk at the same time.

This law has been most rigidly observed by Jews of all ages, and precautions were taken against the slightest violation of it. Not only was the mixture of meat and milk-food forbidden as food, but one must derive no benefit from such a mixture when cooked. Even the taste of meat in milk food, or vice versa, is forbidden, so that if some milk was spilt into a dish or pot with meat, or vice versa, the whole dish and its contents may not be used, if there was a sufficient quantity in the admixture to

give its taste to the food into which it fell, or if the admixture was more than one-sixtieth of its contents. In every observant Jewish household, two sets of dishes are found—one for the use of meat food, and the other for the use of milk food. After partaking of a meal at which meat was served, it is forbidden to eat milk food until a certain time has elapsed (usually six hours).

Respect for Food.—Bread is the staff of life and is regarded as the direct gift from God. No disrespectful use, therefore, should be made of bread or of any other article of food. The crumbs left on the tablecloth, after the meal, should be carefully gathered and not thrown on the floor, where people are likely to tread upon them. Only such articles of food as are not spoiled by being thrown upon the ground may be cast before the bridal couple. God's bounties must not be slighted.

As everything else in life, so the meal was regarded as a religious service. To wash the hands before partaking of food is certainly a most necessary hygienic precaution. With the Jews, however, this becomes a religious law, and the act is accompanied with a special benediction. Another blessing is pronounced before breaking bread and the meal is concluded with a longer prayer (see Chapter XII). According to the Rabbis, the dinner table should be regarded as an altar and the meal as a sacrifice. The conversation at table should be of a higher tone, dealing with religious subjects or with study of the Torah (comp. Pirke Abot, 111:4).

RÉSUMÉ

Just as the priest had to follow a special régime of life, in order that he should be constantly reminded of his calling and functions, so also the priest among nations, "the kingdom of priests," has to submit to a rigorous discipline of life, by which it becomes distinguished from all other peoples. The dietary laws served this purpose more than any other ceremonial law of Judaism. Not only did they help to preserve the identity of the Jewish people, living in the midst of an overwhelming and frequently hostile majority, but they also helped to emphasize the peculiar nature and destiny of Israel. Holiness, implying both separateness and consecration to the divine, is the dominating principle of Jewish life. This is safeguarded by a large number of laws and institutions, which are enjoined in the Bible and which were elaborated in the course of Jewish history. The dietary laws form one of the most important means to this end and have proved their value in promoting the ideals of holiness and separateness among the Jews.

Realizing the great purpose served by these laws in the preservation of Israel as a people devoted to God and consecrated to His service, the Rabbis surrounded them with numerous "fences," guarding most zealously against any possible violation of them, and Israel willingly and gladly submitted to the exacting discipline which they imposed. They have thus assumed additional weight through the importance attached to them throughout the many generations of Israel's life, so that obedience to them served as the symbol of attachment to the nation of Israel and to the God of Israel. Next to the observance of the Sabbath, the observance of the

dietary laws has become the distinguishing mark of the Jew, differentiating him from all other peoples. Aside from all other considerations of obedience to God's law and the adherence to His commandments, the Jew who indulges in forbidden food has effaced one of the most important signs that distinguish him as a member of a peculiar people with a peculiar mission.

These laws, however, also possess intrinsic value, affecting the moral and physical life of the nation. These results are matters of experience, which can be demonstrated. The sobriety of the Jewish people, their wonderful powers of endurance, their ability to adapt themselves easily to new and difficult conditions and environments, have been correctly ascribed to the influence exerted by these laws, which promote the powers of self-control and self-discipline. Many of the individual provisions of these laws also tend to arouse the more tender emotions of kindness and consideration for the weak and the dependent, and to check all kinds of cruelty. Modern science, also, has placed itself on record as approving of several of these laws on the grounds of hygiene. The longevity of the Jews and their immunity to some diseases have been attributed to their abstinence from certain kinds of food forbidden by these laws. These results may have been aimed at in the selection of the individual provisions, but they are not the main object of these laws. The reason for the dietary laws is given in the Bible, as indicated above, and all other reasons are merely subsidiary to it. Holiness is their aim, not physical health or moral well-being, although these are attained through them.

QUESTIONS

1. Is Jewish separatism desirable in itself? What main object does it serve?

2. Define the term "holiness" as used in the Bible. Explain fully the two ideas it suggests.

3. How do the Dietary Laws promote the ideas contained in the term "holiness"? Illustrate.

4. What other purposes are served by several of the individual provisions of these laws?

5. Describe the prohibitions connected with vegetable food. Are these included in the Dietary Laws?

6. Give a brief sketch of the laws regarding clean and unclean animals.

7. Define the terms Shehitah, Terefah and Nebelah. Why is meat salted before it is cooked?

8. The prohibition against eating a mixture of meat and milk has been most rigorously observed among Jews. What is its basis in the Bible? How has it been observed in practice?

9. What is the general attitude of the Jew toward food? How is the meal regarded?

XV. THE JEWISH FAITH—GOD AND MAN

The Idea of God.—Children need not be taught about the existence of God. This is taken by them for granted, and any attempt on the part of the teacher to "prove" it will result in confusion and doubt. The idea of God, however crude and hazy, is inherent in the soul of every child. It should be the object of the teacher to illumine and define this idea, to strengthen the latent emotions of the heart and direct the natural yearnings of the child's soul. Assuming the certainty of the existence of God, the child should be led to recognize the hand of God in the wondrous works of nature and in the still more wonderful events of human history, especially of the history of Israel. The indefinite and vague notion of a God will assume shape and become pregnant with meaning, when the consciousness of the child is directed to the marvelous works of nature, evidencing everywhere the intelligence and power of the great Mind that called them into being and gave each one its place and function in the world. The conviction of the existence of God will receive added strength and lucidity, when the child's mind is directed to the observation of the numerous experiences of men and to the wonderful course of human history. We see wickedness and sin end in misery and ruin; powerful nations wiped out of existence because of their evil deeds and weak peoples preserved because of their adherence to virtue, and we are strengthened in our faith in a just and wise Ruler of the universe. The history of Israel is the most powerful testimony to the great truth that

there is a God Who guides the destinies of men and of nations with wisdom and justice. Every incident in the early records of the Hebrew nation, as preserved in the Bible, manifests God's providence, while the almost miraculous preservation of Israel in the Diaspora, the long and wearisome exile, can be explained on no other grounds but on those of the kind guidance and vigilant care of the divine Ruler of nations. Such and similar ideas might effectively be elaborated upon, but they should be presented not in the form of scientific proofs or arguments, but as illustrations of the conviction already deeply rooted in the mind of the child, so as to make it clearer and more abiding. (See "New Education in Religion," p. 79.)

Attributes of God.—We know that God is, but we do not know what He is. When Moses wished to be initiated into the mystery of God's being he was told that it was impossible for man to see God and live. "Thou shalt see My back, but My face shall not be seen." (Exodus 33: 17-23.) Man can perceive God only as He manifests Himself through His actions, through the influence which He exerts upon nature and upon history, through the wonderful order and beauty of the universe which He created, but God Himself, God in His essence, he cannot see.

Still, the very idea of God, of which we are conscious, carries with it certain qualities and attributes. Unable to think of God in any other way but in the light of our knowledge and experience, we ascribe to Him the perfection of all the power and wisdom which are manifested in our personalities and in the world around us. As the Creator and Ruler of the Universe, He is necessarily greater than the wisest

and strongest of His creatures. The very notion of His existence precludes the possibility of any defect or weakness in Him. He is free from all change or accident. He is perfect in power and wisdom, in justice and love, unlimited by time and space, unaffected by the changes and weaknesses to which material beings are subject.

These ideas about the nature of God, which form part of our very notion of His existence, also have the sanction of Revelation and of tradition. Philosophers may have differed about some of the details in the list of God's attributes, but the more important ideas have always met with general acceptance. It is mainly in the interpretation given to these various attributes which are ascribed to God that the difference between the various religious creeds exists. Guided by the teachings of our Bible and by the interpretations of the Rabbis and Sages of Israel, the Jews have developed these ideas about God in a distinct and definite manner and formulated them in a set of doctrines which are regarded essential to an adherence to the Jewish faith. These doctrines or dogmas deal mainly with our conception of the nature of God and His relation to the world and to man.

For the difference in the attitude to dogmas between Judaism and other creeds, see the Introduction and references given there.

God Is One.—The idea of God's perfect unity has ever been regarded the most distinctive element of the Jewish religion. "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one" (Deuteronomy 6: 4), has been the battle-cry of the Jews at all times. God is perfect, hence self-sufficient and absolute. He does not need to be supplemented by other powers, since this

would cast reflection on His absolute perfection. The belief in the unity of God excludes not only the belief in any other power besides Him as God, but also the possibility of viewing Him in any other light than that of strict unity. He is one and also indivisible. To believe that God is made up of several personalities is to debase the purity of the idea of God's perfection. He is one, and there is no other God besides Him. He is one also in His unity, not composed of parts or persons.

Three times daily does the Jew proclaim, with intensest fervor, his belief in the absolute unity of God. Throughout the centuries he clung to this belief with might and main, gave up his life willingly rather than abandon it, ascended the funeral pyre with resignation and confidence in God's mercy, while chanting the Shema', thereby throwing defiance into the teeth of his persecutors and oppressors. It is in this belief especially, that the Jews were distinguished from all ancient creeds. And even when others have adopted this principle, as did Christianity and Mohammedanism, the purity of the belief still remained peculiar to Judaism. The other monotheistic religions have, for some reason or other, added certain notions to their idea of God or exalted certain persons to such a high position as to debase the original purity of the conception of the unity of God.

God Is a Spirit.—We believe that God has neither figure, shape nor form. He is incorporeal. Our idea of God's perfection implies the belief that He is free from all changes and defects which are the necessary conditions of all material objects.

Great stress is placed also on this belief in Judaism. The prohibition against making any image

or likeness of God is intended to guard against any debasement of this idea. It is but a small step from worshipping God in an image to worshipping the image as God. "Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of form on the day that the Lord spoke unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire" (Deuteronomy 4: 15).

The Biblical passages in which God is referred to in terms of a corporeal being, ascribing to him even bodily organs, should be explained in a figurative sense. We can think of God only in the light of our limited knowledge and experience, and it is from these that we borrow epithets to describe our ideas of the deity. The Bible is a document intended for the people, and the writer freely borrowed terms from human experience, since these expressed best to the people the ideas that he wished to convey, in the same manner as we use figurative expressions today in literature and even in conversation. Such terms, therefore, as "the hand of God," or "the throne of God," or other such anthropomorphisms, have always been understood and interpreted by most Jewish thinkers as picturesque figures for the purpose of bringing near to the ken of the people ideas that are abstract and exalted. "The Bible speaks in the language of men" is the dictum of the Rabbis.

The belief in the eternity of God and His unchangeability is included in the idea of His spiritual nature. Material objects only have a beginning and an end and are subject to change. Spiritual matters are not subject to change and are eternal.

Care should be taken, in dwelling upon the spiritual character of God's being, not to identify God with an impersonal power or influence, but to regard Him as life, consciousness and personality. We

cannot worship a power whose actions are impersonal; we cannot worship a power, an influence, a blind force. The human heart craves for a reality, for a life-possessing and life-giving being, and this yearning is not satisfied by the belief in an abstraction. We believe that God is a Being, a person, who has real and individual existence and still is a spiritual being, free from the accidents and conditions to which material persons and beings are subject.

God is Omnipotent.—We believe that God's powers are unlimited. All the laws of nature and of the universe work in accordance with His Supreme Will. All power and might have their origin in His supreme power. He is limited only by His own will and by His own purposes.

The miracles recorded in the Bible bring out in strongest relief this idea of God's omnipotence. They present Him as the Master of the universe to whose will and for whose purposes the powers of nature, His own creations, must yield obedience. Our conception of the nature of God and of His powers includes the possibility of miracles. The Author of nature certainly can change its laws for certain purposes. The change in the workings of the universe, which the miracle presents, is no more wonderful than the regular process of natural phenomena. It is only its unusual character that arrests our attention and recalls to us an idea or a belief with which God wishes us to be impressed at a given moment.

God Is Omniscient.—God's wisdom is infinite. He knows everything of the past, present and future. He knows the innermost secrets of our hearts, and nothing is hidden from before Him.

It is difficult for us to form a correct idea of the nature of God's wisdom and knowledge. Although we firmly believe in God's omniscience, we are still convinced of man's freedom to act in accordance with the bent of his will. These two ideas appear contradictory. If God knows beforehand what our actions will be, we are no more free to act in any other way but in the manner which will agree with His knowledge. Still, the Jewish religion includes both these beliefs and overlooks this contradiction, ascribing it to the limited nature of our powers of reasoning to appreciate fully the nature of God's wisdom and knowledge. The idea that man is a free agent, able to exercise his powers for good or for evil, is a fundamental element of all religion and of all morality. There could be no responsibility, no duty, no reward or punishment without freedom of the will. On the other hand, God's omniscience is a necessary consequence from our idea of His nature and perfection, on which repeated stress is laid in the Bible. Firmly believing in these two ideas, many Jewish thinkers and philosophers have endeavored to find a solution to the apparent contradiction between them. They say that although God knows beforehand what we shall do, He does not determine our actions. "Everything is foreknown, but man is free," is the dictum of the Rabbis. His knowledge of our future deeds does not constitute a necessary *cause* for these deeds. Our actions are determined by our wills, by the character we fashioned within us and the fact that God knows beforehand what they will be under certain conditions does not deprive us of that freedom. In such elemental ideas, however, which form the basis of our spiritual lives, it is safest to seek refuge in faith, in the inner convictions of our souls which

prompt the belief even in the face of apparent paradoxes.

God and the World.—We believe that this world in which we live, as well as the many other worlds in this vast universe, is the creation of God. His wisdom and power have become manifested in the wonderful order and regularity of the forces of nature. The first chapter of Genesis is not so much a narrative of the manner in which the world came into existence as it is a declaration that it was God who called it into existence. The emphasis is placed on the Creator rather than on the things created. That the world is the creation of God is one of the cardinal principles of the Jewish religion.

God is not only the Creator of the universe, He is also its Ruler and Guide. God's activity did not cease with the creation of the world. His powers and His wisdom are constantly exercised in the direction of nature and in the process of the affairs of His creatures. Nothing happens by chance, nothing escapes His all-seeing eye, nothing is so insignificant as to be beneath His notice and watchful care. This immense universe, with all its wonderful creatures, with its inherent laws of development and growth, with its manifold marvellous phenomena is under the constant care and unremitting supervision of the divine Providence Who called it into being and Who guides it in wisdom and kindness.

Our deep-seated conviction of God's existence and our conception of His divine nature receive constant corroboration and proof from our observation of the laws of nature, operating in the world. The hand of the wise and powerful Ruler is seen everywhere, and His wisdom is manifest in all His works. God,

the Creator of the World, is also its director and ruler, who watches over His handiwork with infinite tenderness and care. He knows everything, not merely because it is part of His very nature to know, but also because He cares to know all about His creatures. He is mighty, and there is no limit to His powers, and still is interested in the fate of the weakest of His creatures and provides sustenance and support for all of them. He is infinite, transcendent, but not distant and unapproachable. "Thou openest Thy hand and satisfiest every living thing with favor" (Psalms 145:16). The meanest of His creatures is the object of God's solicitude and care. At creation His blessing was extended to all His creatures (Genesis 1:22). He cares for them all, He loves them all, He has pity on them all, "even as the father pitieth his child."

God and Man.—The formation of man is represented as the crowning point in the work of creation. God made man in His own image, endowing him with a soul, which partakes of the nature of the divine, of God Himself. He distinguished him from all the other creatures in stature, in the power of using his limbs and in the gift of speech. The features of man's face mirror the wonderful workings of his spirit, which God breathed into him. The soul of man is endowed with the power of reasoning, by which he is enabled to discriminate between the true and the false and by which he is guided in forming opinions and judgments about himself, about the world around him and about God. The soul also possesses the power to appreciate and enjoy the beautiful in the world and in art, to experience the emotions of love and of hate; above all, to distinguish between right and wrong, ever yearn-

ing for the right and for the noble, ever endeavoring to attain to the highest standards of morality and perfect conduct. God has further implanted in the soul of man the power to translate his knowledge and emotions into actions, to exercise his will in his conduct and thus form character. While subject to the passions and accidents in the same manner as the lower animals are, man is able to rise above these by virtue of his divine soul, which, through its will power, is able to suppress passions and control the accidents of his material being and lead him on to a state of perfection. Through the emotional powers of his soul, man is able to derive untold pleasure and joy in life, not granted to other animals, to establish close relationships with his fellows, on the basis of mutual love and respect. By the exercise of his moral sense, and by obeying the dictates of his conscience, he is able to distinguish between good and evil and to build up within himself an inclination towards righteous conduct and set an example of virtue to others. His powers of judgment and discernment confer upon him the ability to see the truth and to learn of the wonders of the world and the greatness of God. "Thou hast made him but little lower than angels and hast crowned him with glory and honor." (Psalm 8: 6.)

Exalted far above all other beings, partaking of the qualities of the divine, man is still subject to all the ills and changes that are the lot of the lower creatures. His soul is, indeed, the daughter of heaven, but his body is part of the earth, actuated by earthly instincts and unholy desires and subject to material needs and requirements. The soul, with its spiritual powers and almost divine character, has the ability to curb these desires and direct these instincts so as to make them act in harmony with its

divine nature. The lower inclinations of man, however, often refuse to yield to the dictates of his better self and lead him on to sin, with all the consequent suffering and misery that come in its wake. In deviating from the path of virtue, man proves himself false to his real nature, to his spiritual self and to such an extent forfeits the special favor of God by which he is raised above the level of the brute creation. God has given him freedom to act as he pleases, but he also implanted in him the power to discern the good and to follow it. The brute cannot sin because it is not responsible for its acts; it has no conception of right and wrong. When man, however, permits his lower inclination to obtain the mastery over him, he incurs the displeasure of God, because he neglects to make use of the divine gift of the soul and God will not permit guilt to remain unpunished. On the other hand, when man seeks to master his animal instincts and to allow his spirit to become ruler over his actions and thoughts, when he endeavors to realize the divine that is within him to its utmost limit, his efforts will be rewarded with God's blessings of peace and happiness. (See Chapter XVIII.)

God in Relation to Man.—God's kindness and love, which are extended to all His creatures, become especially manifest in His relations with man. He is just, dealing out to men and to nations their fate in accordance with their deserts. But He is also kind and tempers His justice with mercy. His love is extended to all His children, even to the sinful and the wayward. He not only guides and assists man in his efforts to reach the highest stage of his spiritual development, but He is also considerate to those who fall by the way and permit themselves

to be dragged down from their high position by the lower inclinations of their hearts. "For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust" (Psalms 103:14). Even though one has sinned God will not reject him. He stretches out His hand to the sincerely repentant sinner, and helps him to rise again to a life of virtue.

This consciousness of a living, loving God, Who watches over us and is concerned in our welfare and in our progress, who knows our innermost thoughts and is ever ready to extend to us His guidance and assistance in our endeavors to follow in the path of virtue and righteousness and to attain a clearer knowledge of the world and of its divine Author, is the great blessing that religion offers to its adherents. This great and infinite God, this just and holy God, who hates all falsehood and all iniquity, is our God, who loves us, who desires our happiness, who delights in our triumphs over temptation and sin. He is ever near to us. He is a merciful Being, who accepts the repentant sinner, who listens to our prayers, who is benign in judgment and compassionate in His relations with weak, stumbling, struggling humanity. This is, indeed, a most blessed assurance. This is, indeed, a most blessed relationship.

If God's relationship to man is manifested in terms of love and mercy, man's relation to God is interpreted in terms of the fulfillment of duty. In order that we may be able to recognize our duties and fulfill them, God has not only given us the powers of the soul, which we call conscience, by which we are able to distinguish between right and wrong, but He also made manifest to us His will through special messengers, whom He especially endowed with the power of discernment and wisdom

to bring His revelation to us. Our faith in God and His nature and our recognition of our duties as prescribed for us by God, constitute religion. The Jewish religion has this in common with other religions; the difference between them is the special construction given to the terms and the distinct process of development which they assumed in the course of history. The Jewish faith consists in the belief in God, who is one and indivisible, who is just and loving, and who has made His will known to us in the Bible and through His messengers throughout all generations.

RESUME

The presentation of this lesson will differ greatly from the manner of presentation of any of the preceding lessons. The subjective attitude of the teacher will form a much stronger element in the manner of presentation of this lesson than in the former lessons, where an array of concrete facts is to be presented (see "New Education in Religion," Chapter IV). The attempt has therefore been made here to indicate not so much how the lesson is to be presented as what points need special emphasis and elucidation. There are several good text-books which deal with the subject and which will suggest to the teacher different ways of approaching the lesson. The teacher should consult especially, Joseph, "Judaism as Creed and Life"; Friedlander, "The Jewish Religion," and N. S. Joseph, "Religion, Natural and Revealed." Kohler's "Guide for Instruction in Judaism" treats the subject only briefly, but the arrangement and the point of view will be helpful to many teachers.

Do not make this a lesson in theology. Let it

be a lesson in religion, arousing emotions and directing them, stirring up sentiment and strengthening it. Argument and proof will only tend to create suspicion and uncertainty. On reaching the Junior or Senior grades, the child has heard enough about God and His nature and attributes. What the teacher should do now is to organize these vague and scattered ideas, define them as far as they permit of definition and impress them upon the child's consciousness by force of the teacher's personality and depth of faith.

Difficulties will, indeed, present themselves in the course of this lesson. These difficulties are not only inherent in the very nature of presenting abstract ideas to children, but some of them are of a kind that have troubled the minds of thinkers throughout the centuries. It is difficult to reconcile God's omnipotence with the idea of miracles. It is difficult to harmonize the idea of God's omniscience with man's freedom of will. It is difficult to reconcile the idea of the goodness of God with the existence of suffering and pain, even while recognizing their disciplinary value. Still, if faith is once firmly established and the tremendous distance between the infinite or the purely spiritual and the finite or the material made clear, these difficulties will be greatly minimized. The limited nature of man's reasoning powers should be strongly emphasized in this lesson, as well as the relation of reason to feeling in the human soul. Not every fact in human life that is recognized as true is so merely by virtue of the intellect's assent. Feelings, even though they cannot be proved by logical syllogisms, are just as important and just as true to us as geometrical theorems which are established by a series of proofs. We know, for instance, that a certain picture or a

certain air of music is beautiful, even though we are entirely unacquainted with the rules of painting or with the technique of music. We feel that it is beautiful, although we can give no reason for the feeling; we are as certain of the beauty of the picture or the music as we are that the three angles of a triangle equal two right angles. Similarly, in our social relations, we feel attracted to one person and repelled by another, without any apparent reason. We are not even able to account for the feeling to ourselves, and still the feeling is true to us, as if proved by the rules of reasoning. The truth of our convictions does not depend on their source, whether they are derived from our emotions or from our intellect. There are some things which we feel to be true, even though we cannot prove them to be so, and our conviction regarding them is as strong, if not stronger, than our conviction regarding mathematical axioms.

When the teacher comes to the presentation of God's attitude to the world and to man, his task will become much easier. God's justice, God's love and kindness are much more easily comprehended than His power and wisdom and incorporeality. The former are so much nearer to us, so much closer to our everyday experiences, that we are able to comprehend them much more readily.

The nature of man, his composite character, his struggle against evil and his progress in the direction of righteousness and perfection can be vividly and effectively portrayed by the skillful teacher. The Bible, especially the Book of Psalms, can be drawn upon for example and illustration to good advantage. The idea of God's nearness to human affairs, of His interest in the life of man and His solicitude for his welfare, should be strongly emphasized.

This idea, if made sufficiently vivid, can become a most potent stimulus to right action and holy living. "I have set the Lord always before me; surely He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved" (Psalms 16: 8). The assurance of God's protection and love, the confidence which we feel that He will grant our prayers and receive us in kindness, even when we have strayed from the right path, is the greatest blessing religion can bestow. God's love for us calls forth in us a feeling of obligation to Him, the duty to do what He wishes us to do, what He commanded us to do. The belief in one God, Who is in direct touch with the affairs of His human children and the feeling of obligation that we experience towards Him, the desire to worship Him and to adhere to His commandments as laid down in His special revelation to our ancestors, together constitute the Jewish Faith.

QUESTIONS

1. How should the idea of the existence of God be presented to children? What witnesses can be produced to strengthen this idea?

2. Explain how the idea of God's perfection necessarily follows from the idea of His existence. In what manner do we conceive of His perfection?

3. Why do we regard the idea of the Unity of God as a necessary consequence of the idea of His perfection? What position does this doctrine hold in Judaism?

4. How do you explain the anthropomorphisms of the Bible in view of our belief in God's spiritual nature?

5. Are miracles possible? Is the belief in miracles out of harmony with the idea of God's omnipotence? Give your own view of this.

6. In what manner is the apparent contradiction between the idea of God's omniscience and the belief in freedom of the will reconciled?

7. Explain the terms God the Creator and Ruler of the Universe.

8. In what is man distinguished from other creatures? What duties does this distinction imply?

9. What qualities do we ascribe to God in His relation to man? Describe the value of the idea of God's nearness to man in helping man in his strivings for perfection.

10. Define religion, giving a definition of the Jewish religion in the same terms.

THE BLESSING

(From a Bas-Relief by Boris Schatz)

XVI. SOURCES OF JUDAISM—REVELATION

The Jewish Bible.—The primary source of Jewish religious thought and conduct is the Bible, more particularly the Pentateuch or Torah. Our convictions about God and His relation to the world, and about man and his duties, find their truest expression in this book. It relates the religious experiences of the Jewish people, their conception of God and duty, their ideals of life and conduct, and the divine help given them in their struggle for holiness and perfection. It narrates the early history of a people who made religion the chief factor in life, who identified themselves closely with the divine in the world and elaborated a system of ethics and observances on this basis. In it we find the large principles of religion and morality which have now become the possession of all civilized humanity; the numerous laws and observances that were intended primarily to maintain the individuality of the Jewish people and the purity of their religious ideals; and, also, although not in a systematic form, the basis of the various religious doctrines and dogmas which are regarded essential to an adherence to Judaism.

The Bible is thus the treasure-house of Israel's religious life—the foundation on which, throughout all these centuries, the structure of Judaism has been reared; the constitution which embodies for all time the laws of Jewish religious conduct. From it, the Jew derives not only the inspiration for right-living and right-thinking, but also actual guidance and direction in the path of holiness and duty; not

only correct ideas about God and His nature, but also the detailed, successive steps that he must take in order to reach the height of that spiritual life which God wishes him to live. It not only tells the wonderful story of a people that made holiness its goal in life, and righteousness its highest ambition, but it also presents in detail the laws of conduct in concrete cases which this people, with the help of God, evolved and elaborated, and which have become the standard for all successive generations. The Bible presents both the law and its application, the doctrine and its effect upon its adherents, the historic event as influenced by the law and doctrine and as influencing the further development of both.

Although the expression of Israel's religious experience and its particular relation to God, the Bible still contains elements of a universal character, which have made it the object of admiration and reverence of millions of men outside of the Jewish people. The purity of its religious ideals, the exalted and sublime nature of its standard of morality, the intense religious fervor which characterizes its pages could not but arrest the attention and compel the veneration of all men whose souls crave for truth and for spiritual guidance. For centuries it has held the unique position of being The Book (Bible) *par excellence,* the book which contains the eternal verities of life, which indicates the true purpose of human existence and offers assistance in the effort to realize this purpose. Even those who deny the divine authority and authorship of the Bible readily admit its great intrinsic worth, the grandeur of its teachings, the sublimity of its conceptions of duty and human responsibility.

NOTE.—The teacher should refrain from using the term "Old Testament" in speaking of the Jewish

Bible. This is a term employed by Christians and implies the existence of a New Testament or Covenant, which we, as Jews, do not recognize. The "Bible," or the "Jewish Bible," should be the only term used in the class-room.

The Authority of the Torah.—The claim of the Torah upon the Jew, however, is not merely a claim of veneration and affection. It also demands his obedience, both to its system of moral laws and religious ceremonies and to the doctrines which it teaches. The Jew is expected to obey the laws of the Bible and to make the Torah the norm of his life, and this not merely because its laws are right and its regulations call forth the assent of his own conscience, but mainly because its precepts are divine and its statutes have the sanction of God Himself. It is an essential doctrine of the Jewish religion that God made His will known to the people by means of a series of revelations, the most important and the most general being the revelation of Mt. Sinai. Israel then perceived most distinctly the purpose of its existence as the religious people, God's "peculiar treasure," to whom these laws were entrusted and from whom the ideals of a pure religion and an exalted morality were to emanate and illumine the world. "Now, therefore, if you hearken unto my voice indeed and keep my covenant, then ye shall be mine own treasure from among all peoples; for all the earth is Mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. . . . And all the people answered together and said, 'All that the Lord hath spoken will we do.'" (Exodus 19:5-8.)

Thus the observance of the Law is made the condition of Israel's claim to be the chosen people of

God, the condition for the realization of the purpose of the very existence of the Jewish people. It is in this sense that the authority of the Torah was conceived by Jews throughout the ages. The Torah was regarded as the supreme document for the guidance of the Jewish people, endowed with absolute authority, because it expressed God's will and God's purpose for Israel. It was regarded as the work of God, sacred and eternal, applicable to all times and conditions. It was also looked upon as the national constitution of Israel, the deviation from which would constitute an act of treason. This is the three-fold claim of the Torah upon the Jewish people. It possesses divine authority, being given by God for the guidance of Israel, so as to make it realize God's purpose for it; its intrinsic worth evokes our assent and admiration, which is shared also by the rest of civilized humanity; Israel gave to it a national sanction, making it the supreme law of the nation and regulating, for centuries, its national life in accordance with its precepts and injunctions.

Revelation and Prophecy.—As pointed out in the foregoing Chapter, God reveals Himself to every human being. He reveals Himself to us in nature and in human experiences, but most distinctly in our own conscience. The ability of man to discern the good and the true, and the inner force compelling him to follow these and apply them in life, is recognized as a divine gift, emanating from the goodness and wisdom of God Himself. While this power is common to all men, it is not developed to the same degree in all and consequently does not function in the same manner in all persons. Men who are endowed with greater strength of mind and

will and who live purer lives will perceive the voice of God in them more distinctly and more readily. In moments of religious ecstasy, when the spirit of man is made complete master over his bodily needs and desires and rises aloft, nearer to its source, the divine spirit of the universe, the soul is able to see things unseen at other times and to grasp ideas that are out of ken of other men. Such revelations came to the patriarchs of old and to the saints of all generations. Ever contemplating the spiritual and the eternal, ever meditating about God and holiness, their souls became attuned to the voice of the divine and they were able to hear it more distinctly and more clearly. Such revelations may come to any man who so disciplines his soul and his conduct as to become identified with the spiritual in the world.

For certain purposes and at certain times, God has revealed Himself to men in a more direct and objective manner, especially when He desired to convey a message to the people. The prophet is essentially the messenger of God, who was to deliver God's message to the people. Aside from this particular mission, the prophet stands in the same category with other pious and godly men, who may see revelations more clearly, but are nevertheless subject to the errors and failings of mankind generally. They were singled out by God to be the bearers of His message because of their superior *human* qualities, because of their loftier souls and great spiritual powers. The message entrusted to them was usually one of national importance, warning against impending danger, rebuking leaders and princes for their evil doings or extending consolation and hope to a despondent people. The personal ability of the individual prophet is manifested in the

manner in which he delivered the message, in the literary style and vivid presentation, in the breadth of vision and picturesqueness of detail. In these matters the various prophets greatly differed, although the message itself came to them from the same source, all being messengers of the same God.

Moses and the Other Prophets.—Among the great prophets of Israel, Moses stands out pre-eminent, not only because of his exalted personality, towering above all the others, but also because of the nature of the message with which he was entrusted. The great liberator and lawgiver, the leader who laid the foundation and moulded the destiny of Israel's national existence, is presented to us in the Bible chiefly as the "man of God," meek and gentle, aiming in all his endeavors at the establishment of a nation with God as its central ideal and holiness as the goal of individual and national existence. Standing at the very threshold of Israel's career, he casts his reflection upon the whole course of its history. His overwhelming personality, manifested in his great deeds for his people, impresses us foremost by its passion for righteousness, by its yearning for holiness and by its eagerness to come in close union with God. In Moses, we see not so much the hero or the lawgiver, or even the emancipator, but chiefly the man of God, whose great aim was to direct his people to know and to worship God.

This great personality, endowed with such superior mental and spiritual qualities, God chose to transmit a message which differed, not only in degree but also in kind, from that given to other prophets. It was not a message breathing forth hope and courage to a despondent people, or rebuking a backsliding generation, or warning against the

approach of temporary danger. The message entrusted to Moses contained a standard of living for all times, laws and regulations that shall guide the Jewish people throughout all centuries, eternal truths and everlasting assurances. All the other prophets spoke to their respective generations, aiming at the removal of some glaring temporary evil or at the revival of faith and hope in times of dire distress. Moses spoke to all generations; his voice is heard throughout the history of Israel, and his precepts and injunctions entered the very marrow of Israel's national life. (Comp. Deuteronomy 29: 9-14.)

It is possible, as some of the Jewish philosophers maintain, that besides the difference in the nature of the message entrusted to Moses and that given to the other prophets there was also a difference in the manner of the revelation in each case. They say, for instance, that the other prophets received God's message in a vision or dream, by which they were overcome and put in a state of trepidation and fear, while Moses received his message while he was fully conscious, God speaking to him as one man speaks to another. "There hath not arisen a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face" (Deuteronomy 34:10; comp. Numbers 12: 6-8). This, however, is purely a speculative matter, of which our conception can only be dim and uncertain. It is not possible for us to form a clear idea of the manner in which God chooses to reveal Himself to His chosen messengers and how these messengers become conscious of having received such a message from God. Lacking the experience of the prophet, we are unable to picture to ourselves the mode of the revelation made to him, and any presentation given of it by the various

Jewish thinkers and sages has the authority only of the man who pronounced it. But whatever the explanation, we are conscious that the prophetic revelation is more distinct, more exalted and more direct than the revelations which we experience in our relations with God, and the revelations made to Moses were of a still more exalted nature, because of their eternal application and because of their effect on the religious life of the Jewish people throughout the centuries.

The Revelation at Sinai.—A unique instance is recorded in the annals of the Jewish people, when a prophetic revelation was made to a whole people at one time. The children of Israel, gathered at the foot of Mt. Sinai, at a given moment, all became conscious of a message from God, entrusted to them to keep and to transmit to their descendants, as well as to the rest of mankind. In the same manner as the message was delivered to the individual prophet the Ten Commandments were given to the whole nation of Israel. These Ten Words, containing the elemental laws of religion and morality, the basis of human conduct for all times, were revealed to all the people, who had just beheld the hand of God in their wonderful redemption from the yoke of bondage and were fired into an intense religious enthusiasm under the direction of their leader, Moses. All of them were, for the time being, endowed with the prophetic gift, all heard the divine voice proclaiming these eternal laws. How they heard it, how they became conscious of the voice of God speaking to them or in them, is a matter of speculation and is open to many different explanations. That they did perceive the message and were convinced of its divine source and of its eternal ap-

plication is a matter of history and part of Jewish belief and doctrine.

The Bible a Book of Religion.—The Bible is thus, according to Jewish belief, a divine document, transmitted through human hands. The teachings and laws, doctrines and precepts found in the Bible are of divine origin, bearing the stamp of divine authority and demanding the obedience of Israel of all times. The form in which these were put, the phraseology and diction, the order and arrangement, the illustration and simile, are the expression of the literary ability of the individual authors by whom these messages were delivered and are therefore not always free from error. The prophet, though possessed of superior qualities of mind and spirit, was not perfect. He was a product of his age and environment and subject to the failings to which all men are subject. With his clearer vision and broader outlook, he may have foreseen many things that were hidden from the sight of his contemporaries. But it is not necessary to believe that he foresaw all the discoveries of later ages or that he was familiar with all the knowledge of his own age. In delivering the divine message, therefore, he naturally used figures and phrases borrowed from the world about him and gave utterance to conceptions current in his time and in his immediate circle.

The Bible, it must not be forgotten, is primarily a book of religion, dealing mainly with matters of faith and duty. We go to our Bible, not for scientific knowledge, but for sustenance and support in our spiritual lives. The efforts to harmonize Biblical language with the results of modern science must necessarily remain speculative in nature. Such efforts were made by many honest and sincere men,

who sought to establish an agreement between Biblical teachings and the scientific theories of their respective ages. As a result, Jewish literature was enriched with a large and important section of literary endeavor, to which the best minds of Jewry contributed. The value of the Bible in life and the truth of its religious doctrines and laws do not depend on such a reconciliation. The truths are divine and eternal, while the form in which they are given in the Bible bears the marks of the scientific knowledge of the age in which these truths were uttered. In its narrative portions also it reflects the moral standards of the time in which the respective authors lived. The divine truth passing through human media may be imperfect in form, but perfect and eternal in essence.

In a similar manner should be viewed also the attempts made by modern scholars to apply the rules of literary and historical criticism to the study of the Bible. The results obtained by these Bible critics are often at variance with the accepted traditions, and this has led some to the belief that the authority of the Bible has thereby been challenged and its claim on our veneration and obedience considerably lessened. The critical study of the Bible is interesting and valuable and if reverently and cautiously followed may help greatly in a better understanding of its contents and in obtaining a clearer conception of the meaning of the text. The kernel of religious truth underlying the various prophecies and the sublimity of their moral teachings, however, are not affected by such considerations. The name of the author of a certain prophecy or the exact age in which a certain law first originated are matters of little consequence to the person who seeks for religious truth and moral guidance. Whenever these

truths were uttered and by whomever they were first promulgated, they contain a divine message and hence possess authority and binding power upon Jews of all times.

It should not be forgotten that the critical study of the Bible is still in its infancy and that its chief exponents are not quite agreed on many vital points. Unfortunately, also, this method of study has found its most prominent followers outside of the Jewish fold, and these are not always actuated by the scientific search after truth alone. Some of them obviously approach the subject with preconceived notions and with deep prejudices, and their aim to establish the supremacy of the new faith over its progenitor, Judaism, is evident in their supposedly scientific works. The Jews, who have been the sole custodians of the Bible for many centuries and have always guarded it with utmost care and affection, have certain definite traditions regarding all the subjects that the modern critics have attempted to investigate. These traditions may be submitted to examination and criticism, but should not be abandoned until the speculative theories of the critics have established their claim to superiority. It is not wise for a teacher to discuss these theories, hypothetical in most cases, in the classroom, unless the class consists of advanced students. Children in the religious school may well be spared the perplexing problems raised by these critical discussions. They should be introduced to the inner content of the Biblical writings; they should be made acquainted with the beauty and grandeur of the prophetic messages, with the lasting worth of the laws and precepts of the Torah, and the speculative theories of the modern critics may well be postponed to a later time, when their historic sense has

been more fully developed and their point of view has broadened.

The Contents of the Bible.—The Bible is divided into three large divisions: the Pentateuch or Torah, the Prophets, and the Holy Writings or Hagiographa.

The Pentateuch, or the Five Books of Moses, contains the narrative relating the beginnings of the Hebrew nation, the story of the Patriarchs, the life in Egypt and the exodus and the formative period of the Israelitish nations in the wilderness. It also has the laws and regulations instituted for the guidance of the nation and the many ceremonies to be observed in religious worship. The five books constituting the Torah are: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. These names are Greek in their origin and describe the contents of only the first section of each book. The books are divided into chapters, and these again into verses. Besides this division, the books of the Pentateuch are also divided into sections (Sidra or Parashah), for the purpose of the weekly readings in the synagogue.

The Prophets are divided into two groups: the Earlier and the Later Prophets. The Earlier Prophets continue the history of Israel from the time of the occupation of Canaan by Joshua to the destruction of the first Temple by the Babylonians. The names of several prophets are mentioned in these books, but, with few exceptions, their actual utterances are not recorded. The books included in this group are: Joshua, Judges, the Two Books of Samuel and the Two Books of Kings.

The Later Prophets include the following books: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the Twelve Minor

Prophets (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi). These books contain the messages of the prophets who flourished in Israel and Judah during the last two centuries of the First Commonwealth. Most of these prophecies are warnings to the people and their leaders of the dire misfortunes that are in store for them in consequence of their evil deeds. Some of them hold forth messages of comfort and hope to the people who have become despondent because of the many misfortunes that befell them. The prevailing note in all these prophecies is the passionate longing of the prophets for the establishment of righteousness and justice on earth and for the removal of all evils that come in the wake of the idolatrous practices which the Jews learned from the nations in whose midst they lived. There are also several chapters in these books that are of a purely narrative character, repeating several decisive incidents in the history of the time, which are recorded in the Books of Kings.

The Hagiographa or Holy Writings are a collection of devotional hymns, popular proverbs or theological discussions, as well as several of the smaller books, of varying content. The last books are mainly historical in nature, Ezra and Nehemiah dealing with the period of the return from Babylon and Chronicles containing a general résumé of the whole of Biblical History. The books included in this group are: Psalms, Proverbs, Job, the Five Scrolls (Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes and Esther), Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah and the Two Books of Chronicles. The Five Scrolls are read in the Synagogue, while the Book of Psalms is largely drawn upon in the Jewish liturgy.

These twenty-four books of the Bible constitute

what is called the Scriptural Canon. Tradition ascribes the fixing of the Canon and the arrangement of the books to the Men of the Great Synagogue, a body of representative men who are said to have flourished during the early period of the Second Commonwealth.

There is another collection of books, known as the Apocrypha or Hidden Works, which were not admitted to the Canon, and were placed in a separate collection. Some of these were written originally in the Greek language, showing their origin to be of the time when the Jews were under Hellenic influence (about 312-175 B. C. E.). The most important of these books are: The Wisdom of Josua (Jesus), son of Sirach or Ecclesiasticus, the Wisdom of Solomon, the Books of the Maccabees, the Book of Tobit, the Book of Judith, the Book of Susana and several shorter treatises. Some of them relate historic events, others tell stories with moral aims, while others again are collections of wise sayings or proverbs. (Comp. Jewish Encyclopedia s. v. "Bible," and various sub-headings; Revelation, Prophecy; Joseph, "Judaism as Creed and Life," pp. 11-21, 87 ff.; Friedlander, "The Jewish Religion," pp. 46-134.)

RÉSUMÉ

The basis for the religious truths, moral injunctions and ceremonial observances, which together constitute Judaism, is found in the Bible. Both in its narrative portion and in its legal and prophetic portions, the Bible reflects the religious conceptions as well as the religious experiences of the Jewish people. It is, therefore, the primary source for all the ideals that the Jews cherished and all the laws

and practices that Jews observed. The Bible's claim upon the Jew is a threefold one: It is the book of revelations, whence comes its divine authority; Israel has made it its constitution and supreme national document, hence its national sanction; it calls forth the assent and admiration of our individual conscience, hence its intrinsic authority.

Revelation is the communion of God with man. Such communion is constant; we need only apply our ears and we shall hear it. Men who devote their lives to the spiritual and the divine in life are able to discern God's voice in them more readily. God has, however, entered into a more direct communion with certain men, through whom He wished to transmit a message to the people. These were the prophets, who, though endowed with great spiritual powers, were still only men of their time and surrounding. The message was divine, but the manner of its presentation depended on the peculiar gifts and endowments of the individual prophet who was made its bearer.

Moses, "the man of God," was entrusted with messages that differed in kind from those given to other prophets. The messages given to him were of eternal application, and they were addressed to all the people. They contained the laws and regulations that the nation was to observe in order to maintain its character as God's chosen people.

All the people of Israel were, at one time, endowed with the prophetic gift and were made the recipients of the divine message. This happened when the fundamental laws, underlying all moral and religious conduct, were to be promulgated. All Israel, assembled at the foot of Mt. Sinai, were made conscious of the divine message entrusted to them. They experienced then what every individual

prophet experienced when a message was delivered to him by God.

Divine in its essence, the Bible is still in form the product of human intelligence and human skill, and hence is subject to the limitations to which the human mind is subject. It is futile to seek to make the Bible agree with all the latest scientific theories. The Bible is essentially a book about religion, and all references to the physical world found in it naturally reflect the knowledge of the age of the respective author. God's message delivered to the prophet was clothed by him in the phraseology and diction which he borrowed from his surroundings and environment.

Similarly, the application of the rules of criticism to the Bible in no way invalidates its intrinsic worth or its divine authority. Such a study may be of great value in the better understanding of the text, but it does not affect the eternal value of the religious and moral truths contained in the Bible. As long as the critical study of the Bible is still in a speculative state the teacher should avoid its introduction in the classroom.

QUESTIONS

1. Why is the Bible to be regarded as the primary source of Judaism?

2. What is the threefold claim of the Bible upon the Jew? Explain in full.

3. Describe Revelation. What was the specific function of the Prophet?

4. In what did the prophecy of Moses differ from that of the other prophets? Was there also a difference in the manner of revelation?

5. Describe the revelation at Mt. Sinai, with reference to its relation to prophetic revelation.

6. What is the relation of the Bible to modern scientific theories? Need the Bible be reconciled with modern science?

7. How should Bible criticism be treated in the classroom? What effect, if any, has the critical study of the Bible on the doctrine of Biblical authority?

8. What are the divisions of the Bible? Distinguish between the Earlier and Later Prophets.

9. Characterize the Hagiographa. The Apocrypha. Quote examples.

XVII. SOURCES OF JUDAISM—TRADITION

Meaning of Tradition.—The belief in the divine origin of the Torah naturally led to the belief in its sufficiency as the standard of the religious and moral life. Its prescriptions concerning belief and conduct were therefore regarded as absolute and eternal in their application. They were supposed to provide for every emergency and for every change that future events might occasion.

In the application of the laws and precepts of the Torah to actual life by successive generations, however, it was frequently found necessary to interpret and elaborate them, so as to make them clearly understood by the people. Many of the laws are given in the Bible in barest outline, and a coming generation had to fill out the gaps and elaborate the details, in the spirit of the Biblical injunction. At times, the Bible only hints at the existence of a prevalent custom, setting its approval on the continued observance of the same, but providing no details of the manner in which it is to be observed. The language employed in the Bible is not always sufficiently explicit. The figures of speech used were probably clear enough to the people of the time, but need elucidation for the understanding of a future generation. In all such cases we rely on the tradition as to the meaning of these laws handed down to us by the generation that lived closest to the period when they were first promulgated, to whom these expressions and hints were probably much clearer than they could be to generations far removed. Thus, alongside of the

Bible, there was developed an oral law for the interpretation and elaboration of its precepts and injunctions. (Read Lazarus, "Ethics of Judaism," Vol. II, pp. 145-175.)

Illustrations.—In illustration of this process, numerous examples may be cited. We shall mention only a few. The law prohibiting work on the Sabbath day (Exodus 20:10; Deuteronomy 5:14) gives no definition of the term "work" and does not limit its application. There are, however, some classes of forbidden labor recorded in other parts of the Bible. Basing themselves on these references and on the traditional acceptance of the term, the Rabbis elaborated and classified a whole series of "kinds of work" that may not be done on the Sabbath. (See Chapter II.)

Similarly, the Bible prescribes: "Ye shall dwell in booths (Sukkot) seven days" (Leviticus 23:42). To the generation to which this law was first proclaimed, the terms "Sukkah" and "dwell" were probably clear, needing no further comment. A future generation, however, must have found the law rather obscure. What is meant by Sukkah? How is it to be constructed? What shall be its dimensions? What material may be used in its construction? And again, does "dwell" mean that one must remain in the Sukkah all the time? Should it rain through the flimsy covering or should the cold be too severe and trying, is one still obliged to stay there? Tradition supplied the answer to most of these queries, and the Rabbis later elaborated the details and arranged them in systematic order.

The Bible does not prescribe any set formula for divorce proceedings. It hints, however, at the existence of a prevalent custom for the husband to

prepare a document and deliver it to his wife, a process by which the nuptial relations become severed (Deuteronomy 24:1-4). The institution of divorce was probably of common usage and experience, so that there was no need to mention it. Later generations, however, had to provide the missing details and prescribe the numerous regulations regarding the form of the document and the manner of its delivery.

These illustrations indicate the course along which tradition has developed and progressed. The Biblical law was elaborated by the Rabbis and leaders of every generation, in accordance with the demands of the times and the traditional meaning attached to the laws by the people. The spirit of the original enactment was jealously preserved in the interpretation given to it and in the effort to make it applicable to changed needs and circumstances.

Extension and Modification of Biblical Law.— The leaders of thought in Judaism often found it necessary to introduce new laws and ordinances, for which provision was made in the Bible. These were intended mainly either to strengthen the ideals of the Jewish religion, or to commemorate events in later Jewish history, or they were called forth by the exigencies of economic or political conditions. Some of these laws were admittedly introduced as precautions against the violation of a Biblical law, and were known as "fences to the Torah." Other laws were enacted as protests against an objectionable practice followed either by the Jews themselves or by the people among whom they lived. The change from the simple agricultural life to the more complex commercial life, the loss of political independence, the close contact with other peoples

and other civilizations, the wandering life that the Jew had to live during the Middle Ages, all these conditions called forth new statutes and institutions, which were promulgated from time to time by the Rabbis and sages of the successive generations.

Important changes in the life of the Jewish people also made many of the Biblical laws inapplicable or entirely obsolete. Therefore the Rabbis had to sanction the abolition of such laws and provide adequate substitutes. The whole system of sacrifices and Temple worship, as prescribed by the Torah, fell into desuetude with the destruction of the Temple. All the agrarian laws of the Bible, as well as the laws of ritual purity, became impractical after the Jews were driven from their land and began the life of a wandering nation. The question as to the suspension of these laws was dealt with in great detail by the Rabbis of those times and the limits of such suspension definitely described.

There were also many customs and practices in vogue, which, by long usage, have become hallowed and thus assumed a religious significance. These had to be reviewed by the leaders, who either ordered their rejection or sanctioned their continuance, in accordance with the religious value which they possessed. All this was done with extreme care and great foresight, and all of these later institutions and customs, whether initiated by the leaders and adopted by the people, or originated by the people and approved of by the leaders, were made in the spirit of the Bible, and whenever possible, based on a Biblical passage or expression. The desire to find Biblical authority for every law and practice in Judaism often induced the Rabbis to do violence to the ordinary meaning of the text in order to make it fit a new law or ordinance. It was felt by them that

the Torah was the supreme authority for Jewish life and conduct, and therefore everything in our life must have its basis in that authority.

Tradition Conducive to Greater Freedom.—Jewish tradition has thus developed alongside of the Torah in two ways. It amplified the prescriptions of the Torah so as to make them applicable to every age and condition and added new laws and ordinances enacted in the spirit of the Torah, as every successive generation demanded them. By its aid Jewish law lost its rigidity and became pliable in the hands of the great teachers and Rabbis, who made it adaptable to all conditions. Jewish tradition is not the product of any one age or generation. It is continually being unfolded and developed, with a view to practical life and healthy progress. The great reverence for the Bible and the universal acknowledgment of its divine character precluded the danger of its becoming superseded by the teachings of the later Rabbis. The Bible is looked upon as the constitution of the Jewish people, with the additional quality that nothing essential could be added or subtracted from it (comp. Deuteronomy 4:2). Tradition is regarded as the commentary and by-laws to the constitution. The Rabbis of every generation, the accredited custodians of the Torah and the acknowledged religious leaders, were by common consent considered the authoritative interpreters of its laws and provisions. Their authority was challenged at times, and the opposition to tradition at times manifested itself even in the formation of sects, such as the Sadducees and the Karaites, but the great body of the Jewish people was always on the side of the principle of freedom of interpretation, which was so nobly championed

by the Rabbis. The literal fulfillment of the law of the Torah would have stunted the growth of Judaism, and it is doubtful whether Judaism could have maintained itself under such a régime through all these centuries. It was due to the force of the authority of tradition that Judaism could adapt itself to the difficult position in which it was placed in the Diaspora. It made Judaism a living religion, renewing its strength and vitality in every age, adjusting itself to the ever-changing conditions and circumstances, but always remaining essentially the same religion, based on the same Torah.

Development Most Democratic.—Few other systems of law developed along more democratic lines than did the Jewish law. Tradition, in Judaism, developed mainly during a period when the legislative authorities had no other means of enforcing their decrees than the implicit confidence of the people in them. Many of the laws, as has been indicated before, first originated with the people and the Rabbis had only to limit and formulate them. Others, which were initiated by the Rabbis, were directly influenced by the popular conditions and demands. A law became binding because the people desired it. Many laws and ordinances fell early into desuetude or never enjoyed general acceptance, merely because they were too difficult of observance or out of harmony with the conditions under which the people lived. The Rabbis candidly admitted the strength of public opinion and its influence on the promulgation of laws and customs, and when in doubt about the correct manner of the observance of a certain law they often advised their disciples to follow the prevailing custom regarding it, which to them would have the same force as the regulations

enacted in the academy. With their love for the Torah and their devotion to its precepts, and because they regarded the observance of these precepts as their chief aim in life, surpassing in importance all considerations of personal comfort and convenience, the Jewish people could be relied upon to follow only such laws and customs as preserved the spirit of the Torah, and to abstain from practices which might lead them away from the path of the Torah. The Rabbis recognized that spirit and fostered it. Therefore they often placed a popular custom in a higher rank than that occupied by institutions enacted after much learned discussion and deliberation.

The Law Not a Burden.—The traditional law which was the outcome of a process of development during many centuries was, therefore, not a burden imposed upon the people from without, but the natural expression of the people's desire to perpetuate their distinctive individuality and to maintain the religion by which they are distinguished, in the midst of hostile surroundings and under most difficult conditions. Traditional laws and customs were regarded by the Jews with the same love and affection as those of the Bible and were followed with the same readiness and devotion. In the course of time the distinction between tradition and Torah became almost entirely obliterated, and the term Torah was no more confined to the Five Books of Moses only, but included the works of all the prophets, sages, poets and philosophers that the Jews have produced, who helped in building up and perfecting Judaism. "The novel idea propounded by the bright pupil at the academy was already foretold to Moses on Sinai," is the manner in which the Rabbis give

expression to this idea. The Jew considered himself as studying the word of God, whether he read from the Bible, from the Prophets, from the Talmud, from the Codes or from an obscure moral or religious work of the Rabbis. He felt that all of these were infused with the same spirit, had the same aim and might, therefore, be designated by the same general name.

It is, therefore, a mistake to speak of the "yoke of the Law" as though Jewish life under the law were a disagreeable burden. The Jews themselves, who led that life for so many centuries, never considered the observance of the law a burden, but rather a source of the greatest joy and delight. To be deprived of the observance of a law was regarded as a misfortune, so that the purport of many of the prayers and supplications for a restoration to Palestine, found in the prayer-book, was not so much the desire to enjoy again a separate political existence as the yearning for the privilege to be permitted again to observe the many laws and customs the observance of which became impossible in exile. The very multiplicity of the regulations concerning the keeping of the Sabbath, or the dietary laws, testifies to the love the people bore these institutions and to their anxiety to have them observed in every detail, so as not to fail in complying with the least requirement.

Nor is it true that the multiplicity of laws and customs tended towards suppressing the higher religious emotions and stunting the growth of the prophetic ideals of a lofty morality, as has often been claimed by recent critics of Judaism. The love of the Law and the delight in its observance emanated directly from the great love for God and the desire to do what He would have us do. The yearn-

ing for communion with God found its expression in Jewish life, not only in a set number of prayers, but in every detail of life as regulated by Jewish law. Every religious act was called a "Mizwah," a commandment from God, and in doing a Mizwah the Jew always felt that he was complying with the will of God. As to the moral value of the Law, we need produce no more convincing testimony than the actual life of the Jew under the Law throughout the ages. The prophetic ideals of justice, righteousness and charity found their concrete application in the prescriptions of the Law and remained vital influences in Jewish life because of this concrete application. The same law that emphasizes the minute ritual ceremonies and observances of Judaism also lays the greatest stress on the moral duties of the individual and of the community and exalts the fine ideals of a lofty morality, as set forth by the prophets and elaborated by the sages of Israel. A faithful description of the organization of the smallest Jewish community in the Middle Ages will establish conclusively the contention that the Law gave strength and life to the spiritual and moral ideals of the leaders and teachers of Israel. (Read Schechter, "Studies in Judaism," chap. IX; "Aspects of Rabbinic Theology," chaps. VIII-XII; Abrahams, "Jewish Life in the Middle Ages," passim.)

Doctrine and Law in Jewish Tradition.—With the change of conditions and with the progress of the human mind, the religious principles and beliefs set forth in the Bible also underwent a process of interpretation and elaboration. Every generation studied the Bible in the light of its own experience and its own convictions and interpreted the divine word in harmony with its own state of mind, al-

though always guided and directed by the accepted meaning of the text as handed down from age to age. Thus, there arose a series of expositions of the doctrines and truths of the Bible, influenced by the changes in the environments and conditions of the succeeding ages. In these expositions we often detect also the influences of a foreign culture and of alien ideals. The contact of Judaism with the various schools of philosophic thought in the ancient and modern world could not but exert a potent influence upon the thinkers and moulders of Jewish opinion and belief. It frequently served as a stimulus to Jewish teachers to review their own faith in the light of the new culture with which they became acquainted, but it rarely affected the vital doctrines of Judaism. Jewish homilists and philosophers approached every new idea or opinion with the firm conviction that the Bible was the divine word and therefore absolutely true. If the conclusions of another civilization are out of harmony with the teachings of the Bible, either the new opinion is faulty or our understanding of the Biblical text is defective. This conviction being deeply set and jealously guarded, the main principles of Judaism suffered nothing from the new light thrown upon them from without. On the contrary, they became enriched and expanded, assumed new values and new significances by comparison with other systems and beliefs. And if an alien idea or belief was borrowed here and there and incorporated with Jewish doctrines, it was immediately given the stamp of the peculiar Jewish mode of thought and invested with the lofty spirituality characteristic of the Jewish religion.

The teachings of Judaism regarding God and man, sin and repentance, reward and punishment, the

future world and the Messiah, which were gradually unfolded and developed in Biblical times, were thus further elaborated and amplified by the teachers and preachers of every generation, and later investigated and systematized by the philosophers who endeavored to reduce them to definite dogmas. The preachers and the homilists usually based their expositions on a Biblical text, interpreting it with a view to making it teach a moral or religious lesson. They often deviated considerably from the literal meaning of the passage in order to establish and strengthen the lesson they wished to inculcate and emphasize. The later Jewish philosophers, however, investigated the Jewish doctrines more independently, criticised them and compared them with other systems, but they also always sought to fortify their conclusions by reference to Biblical texts.

These teachings and investigations were always held in due respect, but they were never vested with the same authority as was the Law. The emphasis laid by Judaism on conduct rather than on creed, on holy living rather than on correct thinking, placed these speculations in a less important position than the discussions about the laws and institutions of Judaism. The importance of a set system of dogmas and beliefs and their tremendous value in moulding the character of the community was always recognized by the Jewish people, but they were satisfied to leave the speculation about them to the specialists, the teachers and thinkers of every generation, while they themselves carried out the laws and regulations, i.e., the concrete exemplifications of the essential doctrines of Judaism, in practical life. The number of Jewish dogmas, their relative importance and their exact limitations were, therefore, never definitely fixed, because the discussions about them

were removed from popular concern and interest. Even the thirteen articles of the creed of Maimonides, which have enjoyed extensive popularity and were incorporated, in various forms, in the prayer-book, remained in a fluid state, permitting of most diverse interpretations and applications. Thus the interpretations of the religious principles and beliefs of the Bible carried with them only the authority of the person or persons who presented them or formulated them, while the traditional legal comments and enactments were invested with the high authority of popular acceptance and were placed side by side with the laws and precepts of the Bible.

The Compilation of Tradition.—The institutions and legal enactments of the early Rabbis, the scribes and the Tannaim, as well as the discussions about the Law carried on in the academies, were for a long time preserved orally only. There existed a certain feeling against writing down the traditions, although there was no distinct prohibition against it, and some of the Rabbis probably had some collections for their own private use. When the mass of tradition became too bulky and too unwieldy and the fear was entertained that much of it might be forgotten in the course of time, attempts were made by different Rabbis to compile the traditional law in a systematic manner.

The first successful attempt to compile the whole mass of tradition was made by R. Judah, the Prince or the Holy (189 C. E.). This compilation is called the Mishnah (literally, repetition, study), and it is divided into six large divisions (Sedarin, literally, Orders), as follows:

1. Zera'im (Seeds). Laws pertaining to agriculture.

2. Mo'ed (Festival). Laws pertaining to the observance of the Sabbath and the festivals.
3. Nashim (Women). Laws of marriage and divorce.
4. Nezikin (Damages). Laws pertaining to civil and criminal cases, as well as to the administration of the law.
5. Kodoshim (Holy Things). Laws pertaining to the sacrifices.
6. Tohorot (Purity). Laws pertaining to ritual purity.

Each one of these large divisions is again subdivided into treatises (Masechtot) and each Masechet into chapters and paragraphs.

In the Mishnah the traditional law is set forth without the argumentation and discussion that centered around it in the academy, although the divergent views of the different Rabbis about a particular law are faithfully given. Even the dissenting opinion of a single Rabbi against that of the majority of his contemporaries was carefully preserved by the compiler. The Mishnah could not, therefore, serve as a code of laws, since the law is not placed there in a definite and decisive manner. It was intended more to preserve the tradition than to be a guide of life to the people, as is further evidenced by the fact that nearly one-half of its contents is occupied with laws and provisions that could have no practical application at the time of its compilation.

After the Mishnah was compiled it became the subject of study and investigation by the later Rabbis (Amoraim), in the same manner as the Bible was by the former Rabbis (Tannaim). These discussions and investigations (Gemara) were also carefully preserved and later compiled (about 550 C. E.) into what is known as the Babylonian Tal-

mud. The Gemara, the discussion and elaboration of the Mishnah, is here grouped about the Mishnah itself, so that the Talmud really contains both the Mishnah and the Gemara. An earlier redaction of the Talmud was compiled about 150 years previously in Palestine, known as the Palestinian Talmud, but the Babylonian Talmud, for various reasons, has enjoyed a much wider popularity and is the one usually referred to when the Talmud is quoted.

As will be noticed, neither the Mishnah nor the Talmud finally settled the laws in a decisive manner. The living word of the Rabbis of each generation had to be consulted in all doubtful cases. Frequently, when the importance of the case warranted it or when the question came from another locality, the Rabbi would write out his decision in the form of a brief, supporting his standpoint with quotations from earlier authorities. In the course of time a large number of these questions and answers (Responsa) were accumulated, so that they now form a considerable portion of Jewish literature and serve as precedents in the decision of doubtful cases.

Attempts were made at various times to codify the great mass of Jewish traditional law. The most noteworthy of these codes are the Mishnah Torah (Secondary Law) or Yad ha-Hazakah (The Strong Hand) of Moses Maimonides; the Turim (literally, Columns), of Jacob b. Asher (about 1340) and the Shulhan 'Aruch (Prepared Table) of Joseph Caro (1554). The last mentioned is the recognized authority for all matters of religious law and practice among observant Jews.

Although the Talmud apparently aims chiefly to preserve legal traditions, it also contains much that is of a purely homiletic nature, wherein are mirrored

the religious principles and beliefs of the time. This portion of the Talmud which deals with homiletic interpretations of Biblical texts is known as Agada, as distinguished from the Halachah, the legal part of the Talmud (read Deutsch "The Talmud," pp. 24-5). Special collections of these Agadot, usually in the form of running commentaries to the Pentateuch, were made by later Rabbis under the general name of Midrash Adaga, or Midrash. A more systematic investigation of the religious doctrines and principles of Judaism was instituted by the philosophers of the Middle Ages, who lived under Arabic influence. The most noted among them are Saadia Gaon (10th Century); Bachya ben Joseph ibn Pakudah (11th Century); Judah Halevi (12th Century), and Moses Maimonides (12th Century).

RÉSUMÉ

The development of Jewish tradition, in its relation to the Torah, was both intensive and extensive. It helped to clarify the Biblical text so as to make it understood by generations removed from the Biblical period, and added new regulations and institutions, in the spirit of the legislation of the Torah, as time and changed conditions demanded them. It followed the natural process of growth and expansion, making Judaism a living religion that aims to regulate all details of life and conduct.

Jewish law has thereby become elastic and pliable in the trusted hands of the Rabbis and sages of Israel. Always mindful of the original intent of every law and ordinance, they still succeeded in making it adaptable to the circumstances of every age. Their authority was derived solely from the implicit confidence placed in them by the people, and they in

THE MENORAH AND THE ARK OF THE COVENANT

(From the Arch of Titus)

turn had the highest respect and regard for the needs and requirements of the people. Many traditional laws and customs had their origin in popular practice first.

Consciously or unconsciously, the Jews saw in the Law and its observance the source of their strength and continued existence as a distinct people. They observed all the details of the Law not merely as a matter of duty, but because they loved to practise them. The Law was looked upon as the word of God, and in its observance the Jew felt that he was doing the will of God. This feeling was sufficient to fill his heart with joy at the privilege of being permitted to do the command of God, to follow all the legal prescriptions and to guard most jealously against the violation of any of them. The Law thus strengthened and fostered the highest religious ideals and helped the Jew to come closer to his God. The lofty moral ideals of Judaism also found their concrete expression in the legal enactments of the Rabbis and remained in the permanent possession of the Jewish people through their being reduced to definite legal formulæ.

The doctrines of Judaism were also developed and amplified in the process of traditional interpretation. It was, however, to the legal traditions that the people lent their allegiance most readily. The presentation of Jewish belief and dogma in the works of Jewish homilists and philosophers, while held in high respect by the people, did not carry with it the same authority as did the law. The interpretations given to the beliefs and principles of Judaism by the later sages and philosophers carried with them only the authority of the person who promulgated them. They were removed from the ken and from the interests of the people, whose ad-

herence and approval were practically the only source of Rabbinic authority in the Diaspora.

The great mass of tradition was later compiled in several collections, and still later codified and systematized. The Talmud, the most comprehensive collection of Jewish tradition, contains the result of Jewish intellectual activity extending over a period of nearly eight centuries. It is, next to the Bible, the most widely studied and the most extensively recognized Jewish literary work. The greater portion of subsequent Jewish literary endeavor centers around this great work, which has always been regarded as the authoritative source of Jewish religious life and practice.

QUESTIONS

1. Show the need of traditional explanation of Biblical law. Quote examples not mentioned in this lesson.

2. Indicate how tradition developed extensively. How did the change of conditions in Jewish life make it necessary to introduce new laws and modify the old laws of the Torah?

3. "Tradition is conducive to greater freedom of interpretation." Explain this statement, quoting an example.

4. Whence did the Rabbis derive their authority? Explain.

5. What was the attitude of the people toward these laws? Explain the extension in the meaning of the term "Torah."

6. In what manner were the religious and moral ideals of the Jewish people affected by the growth of traditional law?

7. Explain the difference in the development of tradition in Law and in Doctrine. What was the difference in the attitude of the people toward the two?

8. Explain the terms: Mishnah, Gemara and Talmud. Name the six grand divisions of the Mishnah.

9. Name the code that is now the recognized authority for observant Jews. Give the name of its author and the date of its compilation.

10. Distinguish between Halachah and Agada. Mention the names of a few of the philosophers who endeavored to formulate a Jewish creed.

XVIII. REWARD AND PUNISHMENT

God Is Our Judge.—Endowed with conscience and fortified with Revelation, man, a free agent, becomes responsible to God for all his actions. Enabled to distinguish between right and wrong, by the help of his conscience, and of the guide for life that religion supplies, and free to follow the right and to avoid the wrong, man is held accountable before God for all his thoughts and deeds. That God holds us so accountable is affirmed both by our religion and by our own conviction. We feel that God is interested in our lives and concerned about our welfare. He knows the innermost thoughts of our hearts and desires, our constant progress toward holiness and perfection. We believe that our good deeds are received by Him with favor, while our evil deeds call forth His displeasure. We are convinced that God is our Judge, determining the value of our actions, conferring His blessings upon those who follow in His ways and do His will, and causing misery and wretchedness to those who disobey His laws and deviate from the path of virtue. Perfect in His justice toward us, and in His love of us, His human children, God deals out recompense for the use we are making of the life given to us and of the divine gifts vouchsafed unto us.

This conviction is borne out by numerous references to the belief in Reward and Punishment found in the Bible and in later Jewish writings. "Great in counsel, and mighty in work, whose eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of man, to

give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jeremiah 32:19). The Bible repeatedly emphasizes the great truth that virtue is as certain of God's reward as is vice of His punishment. The human struggle for virtue and for a holy life is looked upon by God with great sympathy, and is sure to receive His encouragement and support. Persistence in sin, wilful neglect of duty, are as sure to bring retribution. "I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto the thousandth generation of them that love Me and keep My commandments." (Exodus 20:5, 6). Indeed, the divine law prescribes penalties for certain crimes and leaves their execution to human courts. "Man," however, "looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." (I Samuel 16:7). Only God, who knows the hidden thoughts of man and examines the motives for his actions, can be relied on to execute perfect justice. The actions of men and of nations are weighed by Him, their motives are scrutinized and their fates are decided on in absolute justice and fairness. "The Rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are justice; a God of faithfulness, and without iniquity, just and right is He" (Deuteronomy 32:4).

God's Retribution and His Mercy.—In the eyes of the Jewish prophets, psalmists and sages, God's retribution was not a sign of His anger, but the expression of His great love for His human children. "It is good for me that I have been afflicted in order that I might learn Thy statutes" (Psalm 119:71), and the ancient proverb: "Whom

the Lord loveth He correcteth, even as a father, the son in whom he delighteth" (Proverbs 3:12), bears out the general attitude to divine punishment in ancient Israel. This is also what the Rabbis meant by referring to God's retribution as the "pangs of love." God's punishments are not vindictive, but corrective. He visits His punishment upon us because He loves us all, even the sinner who has wandered from the path of righteousness. To allow wickedness and vice to remain unpunished would not be an act of love, but rather a sign of lack of interest in human affairs, a lack of love for the children of man. God's justice and God's love both demand just and equable retribution. They are two aspects of the divine nature, working in harmony and supplementing one another in the relations of God to man.

God's justice is not only tempered with mercy, but is almost identical with it. "Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Thy throne; mercy and truth go before Thee" (Psalms 89:15). In chastising the sinner, God seeks not so much his punishment as his ultimate return to virtue. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live" (Ezekiel 33:11; comp. ib. 18:21-32; Isaiah 55:7). There is a Midrashic interpretation of Genesis 1:31, "and behold it was very good," which brings out this thought most beautifully. The Rabbis declare that the expression, "it was very good," refers to the attribute of God which causes goodness and joy to come to the world, while the conjunction "and" includes also the attribute of God which brings pain into the world. The question is naturally asked, How can pain and punishment be regarded as good? To this the following answer is

given: Pain is as much of a good as is joy and pleasure, because through it man may achieve a portion in the world to come. Thus also, Solomon said, "Reproof and instruction are the way of life" (Proverbs 6:23). The way of life here refers to the future, eternal life, to which man is brought by means of suffering and pain. God's goodness is manifested, not only when we are privileged to enjoy the goods of the world, but also when we are burdened with woe and misery, when punishment overtakes us, because through them we come to see more clearly the purpose of our life and in how far we have failed of that purpose.

It is especially in His dealings with the penitent sinner that God's supreme love and mercy become manifest. Forgiveness is the most blessed assurance that religion extends to the repentant sinner. It does not necessarily absolve from punishment, but it inspires the prodigal son with hope that he will be received again in mercy and pardon by his Father, to Whom he would return in truth. Sin will not escape punishment, but the sinner is not entirely lost. That the repentant sinner, even more so than the purely righteous man, is certain of God's love and forgiveness, is the assurance given us by the Rabbis. God's love is manifested in His dispensation of justice among men, but more concretely in His dealings with the wayward and those who stumbled and yielded to temptation. Their punishment will come, but a place is reserved for them in the immediate presence of God, if they sincerely regret their conduct and seek to return to virtue and piety.

Manner of Dispensation of God's Justice.—It is impossible for us to determine the exact manner in

which God deals out rewards and punishments to men. God's ways are inscrutable and we shall only meet with disappointment should we try to unveil the mystery in which His relations with men is shrouded. We often see the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper and we begin to question God's justice. This has ever been the perplexing question of humanity and has occupied the attention of many a thinker and philosopher, Jew and Gentile. The whole book of Job, according to many interpreters, is nothing else but an attempt to solve this difficulty. Job, apparently a righteous man, possessed of many virtues and praised by God Himself for his piety and uprightness, is suddenly stricken with many misfortunes. His friends, who come to comfort him, try to convince Job that his sufferings must be regarded as retribution for sins that he committed. Job is not satisfied and persists in his query, until God appears on the scene and rebukes Job for his presumptuous query and also his friends for their incorrect reasoning. In a series of striking illustrations, God demonstrates to them how futile it is on the part of man to endeavor to discover the ways of God, which are so different, so far exalted above human reasoning, that men cannot comprehend them.

And this is the only answer that we can offer to this problem, unsatisfying though it is. We know that God is good, that He is perfectly just. We have sufficient proof of that every moment of our lives. Whatever proceeds from Him, therefore, must be good and just. "All that the Merciful One doeth, He doeth for the best," is a favorite saying of the Rabbis. When we see the wicked person prosper, we should first question the soundness of our judgment, before we proceed to criticise God's ways. Is

our opinion of his wickedness correct? May he not possess traits of nobility entirely hidden from our sight? And again, is what appears to us as prosperity really a blessing to him? May it not be the source of greatest misery in the end? Similarly, when we are perplexed at the sight of the sufferings to which an apparently righteous man is subjected, we might ask ourselves the same questions. Our opinions of human goodness and wickedness, of human happiness and misery, often proceed from a narrow, petty view of life and its destiny. Even in our own limited experiences there are occasions when we readily admit our short-sightedness and realize the blessing of God in being deprived of some apparent prosperity, which might have brought upon us untold woes and misfortunes. God's ways may be unintelligible to us, but they are undoubtedly the best, and it behooves us to resign ourselves to them in perfect faith and implicit confidence.

In the same manner should be viewed also general calamities that may affect lands and nations. From our limited point of view, these may seem unnecessary, almost cruel. Great upheavals, destructive wars, devastating plagues that plunge millions into misery and baffle the intelligence of men, are brought into the world, in order to impress upon humanity some great lesson, which, when learned, will result in untold blessings to the race. Why God should choose this particular method, and not one which would appear to us more merciful, is known to Him alone. We must be content with the conviction that God is perfect in wisdom, justice and love and that His wisdom, justice and love are operative not only when we are enjoying peace and prosperity, but also when we are confronted with

the harrowing scenes of ruin, sickness and death. We should learn to repeat on every occasion the words of the famous Rabbi of the Talmud, "this also is for the best." (Read to the class the story as told in Jack Myers' "Jewish Story Book," pp. 46-55).

Virtue Its Own Reward.—Recognizing our inability to comprehend fully God's methods in administering justice in the world, we are still not entirely deprived of concrete proof of it in our own lives and in history. In our search for a solution of the more unusual and perplexing phenomena of life, we are prone to overlook the ordinary, every-day occurrences, with which we are familiar. We constantly see sin bringing woe and misery to its perpetrators and virtue affording bliss and happiness to its adherents. The inexorable physical laws of God demand and obtain their tribute from the one who indulges in vice. He will reap misery and sickness and the world's contempt who has sown incontinence and vice. The unscrupulous man who prospers on the labors of others and whose crooked ways have brought him wealth, position and the other desirable things of life, does not always escape punishment that is due him. If the world is unable to detect his wickedness and check his progress, he often finds his punishment in the retribution meted out to him by his own conscience, the voice of God within him, in the form of terrible regret, life-embittering remorse.

On the other hand, the man who has kept up a constant struggle against sin, who has endeavored to live in accordance with God's law, and has kept his name spotless, is bound to receive the recognition due him and secure the blessings that go to make up happiness. But, even though he be af-

flicted with suffering and poverty, he may still be most happy in his faith. The very consciousness of an upright life is a source of much happiness and many blessings. Every man has experienced such feeling of happiness at one time or another in his life. A child who gives up something for charity, depriving himself thereby of a coveted pleasure, or tells his teacher the truth, thereby exposing himself to punishment, still experiences a feeling of satisfaction in having done the right thing, and this in itself is sufficient reward for him. The pious man, possessed of an implicit faith in the goodness of God, ever striving to commune with Him and to pattern his life after the divine attributes, derives the greatest blessings from the very conduct and discipline to which he voluntarily submits. The feeling that his actions meet with the approval of God fully compensates him for any discomfort or pain that he may suffer. He is as truly rewarded by his virtue as the profligate is punished through his own wickedness.

While emphasizing the idea of recompense and making it a dogma of Judaism, Jewish teachers just as emphatically warn against making it a *motive* for right action. Love of God and the desire to imitate Him and not fear of punishment or the desire for reward should be the motive for all our actions. The famous dictum of Antigonos of Socho, "Be not like servants that minister to their master upon the condition of receiving a reward" (Abot 1:3), expresses the principle so often repeated in the early and later Jewish writings. Disinterested service, virtue for its own sake, doing the right because it is right, this is the highest form of life enjoined in Judaism. The joy of doing God's will, of approaching ever closer to the ideal of holiness, of living a life in ac-

cordance with the law of God, was ever a sufficient incentive to the pious Jew. This is what the Rabbis meant by the term "Lishmah" (for its own sake), which occupies such an important position in Rabbinic theology. This notion of performing a Mizwah and doing God's will, "Lishmah" (for its own sake), without any anticipation of reward, is made by the Rabbis to serve as the only incentive for obedience to the law. The later Jewish teachers express the same idea by the term of "service of love," by which they mean the service given to God simply out of love for Him and for His law, as distinguished from the service performed out of fear of punishment or expectation of reward. (See Schechter, "Aspects of Rabbinic Theology," pp. 159-169.)

The Future Life.—Jewish belief and doctrine offers still another solution to the eternal problem, "Why do the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper?" It says that human actions receive their due recompense in the future world, in the life after death. The immortal soul, liberated from the shackles of the material body at death, enters its natural state and becomes united with the soul of the universe. This world, according to the Rabbis, is only the vestibule, the future world is the real home. The soul, pure from sin, will be able to enter that blessed state at once and rise to the spiritual heights which that state affords. The soul that has not utilized the opportunities in this world to the best advantage but has allowed itself to become tarnished by sordid sin, will have to undergo a process of purging and cleansing before it can attain to the spiritual heights reserved for it. There, in the future world, divine justice has prepared the rich reward for the righteous, a reward measured out in

spiritual delights which can be enjoyed only by those who kept themselves pure in this life and did not allow their souls to become soiled by the mire of iniquity. The soul of the transgressor will be deprived of these joys until it becomes purified again, so as to be able to enter the gates of heaven.

The Rabbis use the following parable in explaining the passage, "Let thy garments always be white, and let thy head lack no oil" (Ecclesiastes 9:8). A King once invited many guests to a feast, but did not appoint a time when the feast would be held. The order was that all the invited guests should bathe, put on clean garments and be ready for the summons. The wise among them, knowing that there is always plenty in the king's palace for any feast, immediately prepared themselves in accordance with the instructions and waited patiently at the gate of the palace for the call to the feast. The fools, however, said that they will have enough time to get ready after they see preparations going on in the palace, and they each went to attend to his business. Suddenly the summons came. The wise, who were prepared for it, were welcomed by the king with pleasure, while the fools, who had to come in with their dirty clothes and unkempt hair, met with the king's displeasure. Thus, the Rabbis say, we should always be prepared for the summons of God to enter the blessed state of the world to come. We should keep our souls clean, our characters pure, so as to be ready at all times for the call to the great feast prepared for us. "Repent one day before thy death" (Abot 2:15). How are we to know when to repent, since we know not the day of our death? It is, therefore, well, the Rabbis say, that we repent every day, since death might overtake us at any time. We should always see to it that our garments

be clean, that our deeds and thoughts be pure, we should always stand prepared to enter the realms of spiritual life, since we do not know when the summons will come to us.

There are, indeed, many Rabbis and teachers who conceived of the life after death in a more material sense than here presented. The prevalent opinion in ancient Jewry regarding this was that the body, in some form or other, partakes of the future life together with the soul. The existence of places of torment, in a material sense, is mentioned in Jewish literature and was believed in by the Jewish people at large. It is true that the belief in a hell of everlasting punishment, with the horrible details given to it in other creeds, finds but few adherents in ancient Jewry. Still many Jewish writers allowed their imagination full sway in presenting a detailed account of the sufferings awaiting the sinner in the next world, and the terms used are mostly borrowed from the material world. The Jewish philosophers of the Middle Ages, however, as well as many of the more modern Jewish thinkers, believe that life beyond the grave can have only a spiritual nature, in which only the soul of man can partake. The reward of the righteous will be the ready union of the soul of man with the spiritual element of the universe, of which it is a part, while the punishment of the wicked will consist in the inability of his soul to soar aloft to the regions of eternal bliss and in the bitter regret caused by this impotence. But even the soul of the sinner will not forever be denied this bliss, for Judaism knows naught of the principle of *eternal damnation*. After the soul shall have gone through some process of purification, of which we, in this life, can form no conception, the soul of the sinner will also be received in the state of spiritual

exaltation, in which it shall remain throughout eternity.

Mode of Class Presentation.—The speculative character of this whole subject makes the presentation of the lesson in the classroom extremely difficult. The teacher is warned to be constantly on his guard and not to attempt to solve the whole problem in a definite manner. It may be well to point out that no other system of thought has ever solved these difficulties to the satisfaction of all. The religious man takes refuge in faith, and, admitting his inability to demonstrate these ideas logically, still clings to them most tenaciously, because he feels them to be the truth. With sincere conviction the pious Jew repeats every morning the refrain of that famous hymn, "Adon Olam": "Into His hand I commend my spirit, when I sleep and when I wake; and with my spirit, my body also; the Lord is with me and I will not fear." "It is not likely that we shall ever succeed in making the immortality of the soul a matter of scientific demonstration, for we lack the requisite data. It must ever remain an affair of religion rather than of science. In other words, it must remain one of that class of questions upon which I may not expect to convince my neighbor, while, at the same time, I may entertain a reasonable conviction of my own upon the subject." (John Fiske, "The Destiny of Man," p. 108). This remark applies with equal force to the whole range of religious doctrines, for the establishment of the existence of which "we lack the requisite data." The teacher's task is done when he succeeds in presenting these subjects in their broad outlines, emphasizing the prevailing Jewish belief regarding them and making it serve as a spur to proper re-

ligious conduct. Without hiding the difficulties attending the elaboration and detailed application of these beliefs, they need not receive undue emphasis in the classroom. The larger ideas of reward and punishment, of virtue being its own reward, and of the future life, are sufficiently reasonable and even logical, as based on the belief in the justice and goodness of God.

The student is directed for a further study of this subject to Joseph, "Judaism as Creed and Life," pp. 90-112; Schechter, "Studies in Judaism," pp. 212-232.

RÉSUMÉ

God is our Judge. He not only knows all our actions and all our thoughts, but He also determines their value in relation to the final aim of life. Our idea of human responsibility, based on the belief in human freedom of the will to act, implies divine justice. Perfect justice, as divine justice must needs be (cf. Genesis 18:25), presupposes reward and punishment. Without a belief in divine retribution, the idea of human responsibility would be meaningless. Rewards and punishments are administered by God, not only as a recompense for the uses that we are making of the gift of life, but also as warnings and encouragements to future conduct.

Retribution was ever regarded by Jewish teachers as an act of mercy rather than of anger or revenge. It is because God loves us, because He is interested in our individual progress toward holiness, that He punishes us for our transgressions. This is most obvious in the relation of God to the repentant sinner. The idea of repentance and of forgiveness, the most glorious and reassuring thought that religion offers to weak and stumbling humanity,

illustrates concretely the religious conception of God's love and compassion.

We are not always able to understand God's ways in meting out justice. We are often puzzled by conditions that may appear to us as unjust and inexplicable. This is due to our limited view and our narrow conception of life and its destiny. The goodness and justice of God are sufficiently well-established by our own experiences to make us believe that what appears to us harsh and undeserving is due to our inability to appreciate the ways of God and His standards of judgment.

That God's justice is operative in this world is seen in the every-day occurrences of life. Vice brings its own punishment and wickedness does not always escape its deserved retribution. Virtue and piety bring happiness in the consciousness of having done the right and, thereby, having received the approval of God.

The highest life is the one in which virtue is practised for its own sake, without a thought of the recompense that it will bring. Doing the right because it is right, and not out of fear of punishment or out of the expectation of reward, is regarded by Jewish teachers as the most acceptable kind of service.

While reward and punishment are dispensed in this world, the real recompense, according to the Jewish belief, will be bestowed in the world to come. "What we call death may be but the dawning of true knowledge and of true life." In the life after death rewards and punishments will be measured out according to spiritual standards. This being entirely out of the ken of human experience, we cannot expect to form definite and exact ideas about its detailed application. We are satisfied with the

conviction that our immortal souls, purified from sin, will enjoy the bliss of being near to God and will be allowed to continue a spiritual existence throughout all eternity.

QUESTIONS

1. Explain how the feeling of human responsibility implies the belief in Reward and Punishment.

2. Contrast human and divine justice. Why is divine retribution necessary in cases where permission is given to human courts to exercise judgment?

3. How do you reconcile divine justice and divine mercy? Illustrate your reply by the idea of God's forgiveness.

4. Is suffering always the result of God's displeasure? How does the book of Job answer the problem of why the wicked prosper and the righteous suffer?

5. "The seeming injustice of the world should be rather ascribed to our incompetence to grasp God's ways." Explain this statement.

6. Mention cases in your own experience where reward and punishment were equably meted out.

7. "Virtue, for its own sake, is the highest ideal in Judaism." Explain this, quoting examples from Jewish literature.

8. Describe the Jewish idea of a future life. How are rewards and punishments dispensed in that life?

XIX. THE MESSIANIC HOPE

The Election of Israel.—"Thou hast chosen us from all peoples; Thou hast loved us and favored us and exalted us above all tongues; Thou hast sanctified us by Thy commandments and brought us near unto Thy service, O our King, and hast called us by Thy great and holy name." This prayer, recurring in all the festival prayers of the year, expresses a belief firmly adhered to by Jews throughout their history. While not given a place among the creeds of Judaism, the idea of Israel's election has held a prominent position in the development of Jewish theology and exerted a potent influence on the formation of Jewish character. "Even a cursory perusal of Bible and Talmud leaves no doubt that the notion of the election always maintained in Jewish consciousness the character of at least an unformulated dogma" (Schechter, "Aspects of Rabbinic Theology," p. 57).

Although God's love extends to all His creatures, Israel is the object of His especial care and solicitude. All men are made in the image of God, but Israel is His child (cf. Abot III:18), aye, His first-born child (Exodus 4:22). Israel is God's chosen people, entrusted by Him with a great task, with an exalted mission. Because of the great love God bore for Israel, He made him the custodian of the everlasting truths of religion, the guardian of the purest religious doctrines and of the holiest discipline of life. Because of His great love for all the children of men, God has selected this one people

with whom these glorious truths should be deposited and kept undefiled until all other peoples are ready to accept them and make them their own. Not for power or military prowess, not for political prestige or economic superiority, nor even for the purpose of spreading culture and enlightenment was Israel elected by God. It is a spiritual mission that was imposed upon the Jew,—a mission that deals with the highest concerns of life,—with truth and righteousness. Other nations may have been appointed special tasks in life, but Israel was given the supreme task, the task of following and spreading the belief in one God, who desires righteousness to fill the earth. Other nations may have contributed largely to the world's wealth in art and science, in law and government, but Israel was chosen to exemplify the holiness of life, to bring God near to human experience and thus sanctify human conduct and human aspirations.

Twofold Aim of Election.—The idea of the election of Israel was conceived at the very dawn of Jewish history (cf. Genesis 18:19), but it was definitely formulated at the decisive moment of Israel's national existence, at the time of the Revelation at Sinai. Then the real purpose and object of this election were made clear. "And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." (Exodus 19:6.) "A kingdom of priests" implies a world constituency to minister to. "A holy nation" denotes a nation that renounces worldly power and worldly ambitions, a nation that bases its national life on a spiritual foundation and insists upon the conformity to this standard of life by every individual member. This is the twofold purpose of Israel's election. The Jew was chosen by God to live a godly life, to make

the ideal of holiness a vitalizing principle of life, to manifest the great truths of religion and morality in his everyday existence. He was entrusted with God's Torah and sanctified with His commandments, and he was thus brought closer to the service of God, closer to the ideal of holiness. Readily assuming the responsibilities that the Revelation at Sinai imposed upon him, the Jew thereby consecrated his life, individual and national, to the service of God and made the attainment of holiness his entire concern. But the ideals of life that go with the idea of election are not to remain the exclusive possession of Israel. They are to become of world-wide application; they are the final aim and object of the life of the human race. Through Israel, all the nations of the earth are to be blessed (cf. Genesis 12:3). Israel is to serve humanity, to enlighten the world with the truths that were entrusted to him, with the standard of life that leads to holiness. He is to form a kingdom of priests, ministering to the whole world the blessings that true religion and an exalted morality vouchsafe to their adherents. The mission of Israel is thus an important part of the doctrine of Israel's election. Israel must be a holy nation, a nation that makes holiness of life its highest aspiration, and, being such, Israel will accomplish its mission of being the teacher of mankind in those matters over which he was made custodian.

Aim Still Unrealized.—That the Jew has not always been faithful to his duties and loyal to the task imposed upon him, his own history, as chronicled by his own teachers and guides, bears sufficient testimony. He was not always able to withstand the temptations of worldliness, and often al-

lowed himself to be led away from the path laid out for him by God. He often allowed his priestly rank to suffer, and instead of leading others to the service of the true God and to the observance of His law, he permitted himself to be led by them to the worship of idolatry and to the pursuance of sin. Israel's backslidings were many, and in every instance were met with severe punishment. Because of his high calling and exalted mission, his transgressions were more severely punished, and his sins met with more exacting retribution. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities." (Amos 3: 2; see Chapter IV.) But in all the trials and sufferings with which Israel was visited, in all the terrible retribution meted out to him throughout the ages, he has not ceased being God's elect. God's love for him has not departed; he still remains God's chosen people, God's missionary to the world. "For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall My covenant of peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath compassion on thee" (Isaiah 54:10). And if many of the nations have gone astray and become unfaithful to their ideals of life, there were always some who continued to treasure the national heritage and to preserve the national standards. The "remnant of Israel," "that shall not do iniquity nor speak lies" (Zephaniah 3:13), could be trusted to maintain the national traditions and to uphold the ideals of Judaism. Israel suffered for his sins, and his punishment was the more severe, because more was expected of him, and because his life was to serve as a model to humanity. But his teachings have penetrated the hearts of mankind and have taken root in the strivings and the higher aspira-

tions of the race. If the world has not as yet entirely accepted the great truths of Judaism, and if the world will not yet hearken to the teachings of the "remnant of Israel," and subscribe to their ideals of life and standards of belief, Israel does not lose hope nor does he become discouraged. The time will come—aye, it must come—when all men will recognize the eternal truths of the Jewish religion, when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9), when righteousness and peace will be the guiding stars of all men and of all nations.

The Messianic Hope.—This is the Messianic hope of the Jews, which the prophets predicted and to which Israel has clung most fervently throughout his existence. This is the great future promised by God through His prophets, sages and seers, for the speedy realization of which every generation of Jews has been praying and hoping. It finds expression in every book of the Bible and in all subsequent Jewish literature. It is the dominant note of the Jewish prayer-book and has formed a most attractive theme for poet and artist of all ages. At the end of days, in God's own time, all the peoples of the earth will come to recognize the truths of Israel's teachings and the grandeur of his standard of life. The lofty conceptions of a pure God, one and indivisible, and of an exalted morality which hallows life, will become the property of the whole race.

"We therefore hope in Thee, O Lord our King, that we may speedily behold the glory of Thy might, when Thou wilt remove the abominations from the earth, and the idols will be utterly cut off, when the world will be perfected under the kingdom of the

Almighty, and all the children of flesh will call upon Thy name, when Thou wilt turn unto Thyself all the wicked of the earth. Let all the inhabitants of the world perceive and know that unto Thee every knee must bend, every tongue must swear. Before Thee, O Lord, our God, let them bow and fall; and unto Thy glorious name let them give honor; let them all accept the yoke of Thy kingdom, and do Thou reign over them speedily, and for ever and ever. For the kingdom is Thine, and to all eternity Thou wilt reign in glory, as it is written in Thy Law, The Lord shall reign for ever and ever. And it is said, And the Lord shall be King over all the earth; in that day shall the Lord be One and His name One." (See "Alenu," often called "The Adoration," in the Jewish prayer-book.)

This beautiful prayer, recited three times daily by every pious Israelite, embodies the glorious conception of the Messianic period, for which every Jewish heart yearns. The picture of a regenerated humanity, of the world won over to the exalted ideals of truth and righteousness, which Jewish prophets untiringly preached and which Jewish sages ceaselessly taught, ever filled with hope and courage persecuted and maltreated Israel and made him forget his present woes in the contemplation of the great future it depicted for humanity. It ever inspired him with added enthusiasm for his faith and made him forget the sufferings he had to endure for its sake at the hands of an ignorant and prejudiced world. At the end of days, his mission will be accomplished and his task fulfilled, by which he and the world about him will enjoy the pure and glorious happiness that results from living the godly life, the holy life.

Israel in Messianic Age.—Israel, God's elect, the teacher of mankind, naturally occupies the central position in the prophetic picture of a regenerated world in Messianic times. Even before the arrival of that glorious period, Israel will be rehabilitated, restored to his ancient inheritance, whence the light of the universal religion will shine forth and illumine the world. Under the guidance of a great leader, appointed by God, a scion of the house of David, the ideal king of the Jewish people, all Jews will be gathered back to Palestine and there establish a great power, based on the exalted principles of righteousness and peace, rebuild the Temple and reinstitute the ancient Jewish form of worship. This leader, endowed with great wisdom and with higher spiritual powers, will be the Messiah (Heb. Mashiah, literally, Anointed), who will bring about the regeneration of Israel upon his own sacred soil. Many Jewish writers have surrounded the person of the Messiah and the period of his advent with a number of supernatural qualities and events, making the approach of the great "day of the Lord" a day of judgment for all nations, and associating with its arrival many miracles and wonders. It is at that time that the dead will be resurrected, all past generations participating in the supreme happiness that will come to the human race through his advent. In the dark ages, when the Jew was subjected to the grossest indignities and was made the target of brutal hate and persecution, when the present held out for the Jew no comfort, no refuge, no hope for redress, the Jew loved to indulge in such dreams of the promised future, weaving around it most fanciful pictures which his imagination, let loose, created. Many of these pictures of the Messianic times present great upheavals, destructive

wars among the nations and the final discomfiture of those who attempted to check the progress of the Messiah. The materialistic element is also present in some of these pictures of the future, making the righteous of all generations participate in a gorgeous feast prepared for them from the flesh of the Leviathan (monster fish) and the Behemot (animal), and of the wine kept for that occasion since the creation of the world. The triumphal march of the Israelites to Jerusalem led by the Messiah, also became associated in their fanciful imagination with many wonders and miracles. On these they loved to dwell and expatiate in narrating them to the young children.

The more sober-minded and more rational Jewish thinkers and writers, however, conceived of the Messiah as a man, a descendant of the Davidic dynasty, "divine only in the greatness of his natural gifts," who will guide the destinies of a rejuvenated Israel and establish an ideal kingdom in Palestine, which will serve as a model of government to all nations. The Messianic age will differ from the present age only in this, that Israel will then have regained his sovereignty, and that the world will have become converted to the fundamental ideals of the Jewish religion. In almost all the various conceptions of the Messiah and of the Messianic period, found scattered in Jewish literature of all ages, the restoration of Israel to Palestine and the figure of the personal Messiah occupy a foremost position. Even that grand, universalistic prophecy, quoted by both Isaiah and Micah, makes Palestine the central scene of the world's regeneration and presumes the re-establishment of Israel's national life. "And it shall come to pass in the end of days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be es-

tablished as the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say: Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways and we will walk in His paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Isaiah 2: 2-4; Micah 4:1-4).

Modern Differences of View.—The rational interpretation of the Messianic belief, given by some of the Jewish philosophers of the Middle Ages, was still further modified by many modern Jews who wished to strip this doctrine of Judaism of all the mystical elements associated with it. While all Jews agree in the belief of the Messianic era, with its grand universalistic ideals of peace, righteousness and the belief in one God as the principles of the whole human race, the agreement on the national elements of that hope and on the figure of the personal Messiah is not quite so general. Many modern Jews entirely reject the national claims and aspirations of the Jewish people, refuse to confine the future of the Jewish people to any particular territory, and do not recognize the belief that an individual would become the Messiah, who would bring about the era of the Kingdom of God upon earth. They say that Israel, "the servant of the Lord," is the Messiah of humanity, and that Israel, scattered among the nations of the earth, is best able

to make his teachings known to the world and thus more readily fulfill his mission. The Messianic era, according to their belief, will be the time when all peoples will accept the fundamental teachings of Judaism, when the ideals of the Jewish religion will pervade all men, when the human race will live in perfect peace and concord, all men brothers and God the Father of them all. The expulsion of Israel from his land and his wanderings over the globe was not a punishment for his sins, but a part of God's plans for the progress of the human race. The return of Israel to Palestine and the re-establishment of the Jewish nation as a body politic, would be a misfortune, since this might greatly hinder the speedy realization of our hopes for a great era of universal peace and happiness.

Over against this theory is the belief of the great bulk of the Jewish people who still cling most tenaciously to the hope of a national resurrection of Israel in Palestine, under the guidance of a personal Messiah. They also believe in the mission of Israel, but they say that this mission can be best carried out through the force of example, and Israel can offer the example of a pure, noble and exalted national and individual life only when he is permitted to live his own normal, natural life in the place of his nativity and of his early history, without the interference of outside influences. Israel in exile is unable to manifest in his life the ideals of his religion, because of the many disturbing factors that surround him. He cannot realize the best that is within him when he has to live in un-Jewish surroundings and partake of an un-Jewish civilization. Israel in Palestine, in the land of his ancestors, every speck of dust of which brings up to him associations of his past glory and of his past history,

every stone of which reminds him of the great achievements of his people, where he can live his own life undisturbed, will be able to present to the world an example of true Jewish ideals, unadulterated by foreign influences, an example of the life that God intended him to live, and thus become the real missionary of the world. They point to the numerous prophecies which predict a glorious future for the nation of Israel on its own soil. They point to the millions of Jews, who are even today persecuted and abused by a cruel world, and whose only hope and consolation is this glorious belief. Jewish nationality, they claim, is a reality as long as the majority of the Jews cling to it, and therefore has a right to a separate existence wherein it might work out its destiny in accordance with its own genius and its own instincts. Some of these national Jews, indeed, together with their brethren, the denationalized Jews, also exclude the miraculous element of the Messianic period, in which most Jews have always believed. Others even exclude the figure of the personal Messiah from their picture of the future of Israel. But most of them agree that that future will be enacted in Palestine, on Jewish soil.

These differences of opinion regarding the Messianic hope have found expression in various movements in modern Jewry. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that Jewish children be made acquainted with the underlying principles of these differences. While the teacher's own point of view will probably and justly receive stronger emphasis and more convincing interpretation, the other divergent views should be presented in a sympathetic and tolerant manner. The issues involved in these divergent views are of vital, present-day interest,

affecting the development of the various sections of the communities in which we live, and it is therefore essential that the rising generation should have an intelligent, sympathetic view of the fundamental ideas underlying them.

False Messiahs.—Jewish history records the appearance at various times of certain individuals who declared themselves as Messiahs, appointed by God to liberate His people from bondage and restore them to their own land. Some of these were deluded dreamers, whose souls were inflamed by the glowing pictures of the Messiah painted by the medieval mystics, while others were probably unscrupulous impostors, who preyed upon the credulity of the masses, who were always praying and waiting for the miraculous appearance of God's anointed. Some of these false Messiahs had political ambitions, endeavoring to wrest Palestine from the hands of its possessors by force of arms, others preferred to wait for a miraculous intervention, indulging in fasting and praying and other pious practices by which they misled the people into the belief that they were the persons selected by God to effect Israel's deliverance. The mystical elements of the Messianic belief, which became intensified and elaborated with the increase of Israel's suffering in exile, beclouded the minds of the people and dulled their intelligence, so that they became a ready prey to the machinations of any dreamer or impostor who appealed to their fancies. These false Messiahs usually appeared at times of great distress, when all hope for natural relief and deliverance was crushed, and the poor, hunted Jews could find comfort only in the fanciful picture of a miraculous intervention in their behalf. It was then that these

men arose, who proclaimed themselves messengers of God, and found a welcome reception at the hands of the despairing Jews. The most noted of these were Bar Kochba, in the second century, who attempted, by means of arms, to throw off the yoke of the Romans, and Sabbetai Zebi, who, in the seventeenth century, succeeded in attracting a large number of followers by his ascetic life and the many miracles which he is alleged to have performed. The appearance of these Messiahs was usually followed by added persecution on the part of the governments under which the Jews lived, and by many conversions to the dominant faiths.

Relation to Christianity.—Christianity accepts the Jewish Bible, recognizing it as the word of God, but it says that the New Testament superseded the teachings of what they call the Old Testament. Together with the Jewish Bible, Christianity also accepts the Jewish belief in a Messiah and a Messianic period, but it says that all the prophecies regarding a Messiah were fulfilled in Jesus, the Christ or Messiah, whom God sent to redeem the world. While Jesus himself did not claim the title of Messiah, the development of Christianity as a religion later revolved mainly around the idea of the Messiahship of Jesus, bringing about even the paradox of making him a descendant of the Davidic family on his father's side. In their attempt to establish the claim of Jesus to the Messiahship, the early Christian Fathers did not hesitate to do violence to some Biblical prophecies in order to make them fit the appearance of Jesus and his short career on earth. In its contact with other systems of belief and philosophy, Christianity surrounded the figure of Jesus with many other attributes, most of them

foreign and antagonistic to the pure belief of its mother-faith, but the Messiahship of Jesus was always held as an essential element in the Christian belief and dogma, and its relation to the Messianic prophecies of the Jewish Bible as firmly established.

The Jews refuse to recognize Jesus as the Messiah, because, according to their belief, he lacked the characteristics of the Messiah, as presented by their prophets. The era of universal peace and universal knowledge, of righteousness and justice to all, which forms an essential element in the Jewish conception of the Messianic hope, has not come with the advent of Jesus and the establishment of Christianity. The attitude of the Church to the Jews throughout all these centuries only helped to intensify Jewish conviction that the Messiah is yet to come, and that the human race is as far removed from the Messianic epoch as it ever was. Christianity, not only as the Christians practised it throughout the Middle Ages, but even as its teachers taught it since its formation in the times of Paul, presented to Judaism no high ideals which they did not already possess, while the dogmas and doctrines of the Christian theology as developed by the Church Fathers were even repulsive to the Jewish mind, fed on the exalted notions of a pure monotheism and of a spiritual morality.

Jewish thinkers and philosophers look upon the rise of Christianity and of Mohammedanism as preliminary stages in the progress of the world toward the acceptance of the pure truths of Judaism. Christianity, as well as the religion of Islam, planted on Jewish soil, helped to clarify the atmosphere and to remove the gross superstitions and the distorted views of life presented by paganism. They were not indeed able to escape pagan influence, and in their

march of conquest they too were often conquered. Many of the important dogmas and practices of both these religions were originally concessions to heathen customs and modes of belief. In their zeal to gain many adherents, the early Christians allowed these foreign notions, foreign to the original ideals of Judaism, to gain a permanent place in Christian doctrine. But, in spite of this, the central ideas of these religions and their moral teachings, derived from the Jewish Bible and from Jewish life, permeated the world and prepared mankind for the more glorious future promised to them when all men will recognize Jewish truths in their entirety and adopt Jewish ideals of God and of holiness, of human conduct and the relationship to God, as completely and as purely as they are taught in the Jewish Bible and interpreted by Jewish Rabbis and sages of all generations. The great Jewish philosopher, Maimonides, says regarding the attitude of Judaism toward its daughter religions: "All events connected with Jesus and with Mohammed, that rose after him, served only to pave the way for the King Messiah, who will reform all mankind and lead them to the unanimous service of God, as it is said, 'For then will I turn to the peoples a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve Him with one consent' (Zephaniah 3:9). How can this be done? Almost all people have through them—Jesus and Mohammed—become acquainted with the idea of Messiah, with the words of the Torah and the divine precepts. Through them the knowledge of the Bible spread even unto the remotest islands and unto many nations 'uncircumcised' in heart and uncircumcised in flesh" (quoted in Friedlander's "Jewish Religion," p. 228). The same idea is also expressed by an

earlier Jewish philosopher, R. Judah Halevi. He also regards Christianity and Islam as preparing the way for a better recognition of the ideals of Judaism. "When all mankind shall learn to appreciate the true value of the stem, the fruit of which they have so long enjoyed, they will give honor to Israel, and, with the chosen people, will enter the Messianic kingdom."

For further study of the subject of this lesson, the student is referred to the following works: Schechter, "Aspects of Rabbinic Theology," Chaps. IV, V, VI, VII; Joseph, "Judaism as Creed and Life," pp. 113-129; Greenstone, "Messiah Idea in Jewish History"; Abrahams, "Judaism," Chaps VII, VIII; Jewish Encyclopedia, articles, "Christianity," "Jesus," "Messiah," "Pseudo Messiahs"; Mendes, "The Jewish Religion," pp. 161-171; Friedlander, "The Jewish Religion," pp. 155-167, 225-232; Kohler, "Guide for Instruction in Judaism," pp. 38-45.

RÉSUMÉ

The doctrine of the election of Israel, instead of making us arrogant, is to fill us with the consciousness of deepest obligation. The election implies added duties and responsibilities. We are made thereby the custodians of the greatest truths of religion and morality, which, as we believe, God proposes shall eventually become the possession of the whole human race. It is because of His great love for all men that God designated Israel as the guardian of the exalted principles of life for them.

The mission of Israel is an important element in the idea of Israel's election. Israel should be a holy nation, a nation wedded to the ideal of a high spiritual life, and being such, it is to be the kingdom of

priests, ministering to the world, teaching humanity the beauty of holiness, the grandeur of this exalted life.

This twofold aim of the election idea has not yet been realized. Neither has Israel always been faithful to his trust, nor has the world as yet learned all the truths that Israel has in store for it. Slow is the world's progress toward truth and righteousness. Uncertain and painful has been Israel's march on the path of holiness. Israel sinned and his sins have met with severe retribution. But even in the time of the most rebellious backslidings of the Jewish people, there were always some who maintained the ideals of Judaism and kept them undefiled. "The remnant of Israel" then became the hope of the prophets and teachers of Israel. They will guard Israel's treasures for Israel and for the world, until these shall have learned to appreciate their value and adopt them in their lives. That time may be far removed, but it is sure to come, and all human ambition should be directed toward the speedy realization of that glorious period.

This is the Messianic hope of the Jewish people. In the future, in God's own time, the prophetic ideals of universal knowledge and universal righteousness will become realized. The whole world will then accept the fundamental principles of the Jewish religion, which lead to holiness and happiness. Israel will then be restored to his national inheritance, establish a government, under the guidance of the Messiah, a scion of the family of David, who will rule Israel with justice, and in whom will be realized the grand ideals of the prophets.

In the course of Jewish history, this ideal of the future of Israel in the regeneration of the world in Messianic times has been surrounded with a number

of beliefs, some of which gained general acceptance and became part of the Jewish picture of the Messianic age. One of these beliefs is the hope for the resurrection of the dead of all generations to participate in the joys of the Messianic era. While the exact limitations of this belief have never been definitely established, it was included in the thirteen articles of faith, compiled by Maimonides, and incorporated, in various forms, in the Prayer Book. Other notions introduced into the picture of the future of Israel are of a more material nature and have been created in the popular imagination that loved to dwell on the grand dream of the great future, especially at the time when the present was dark and gloomy.

Jewish thinkers and philosophers speak of the Messianic era only as the era of universal peace and universal happiness, when Jewish doctrines of belief and standards of life will become the guides of all humankind. They believe also that Israel's restoration to his own land under the guidance of a man, a descendant of the house of David, will be effected at that time.

In modern times, there are many divergent views regarding the Messianic belief. Some make it entirely universal, rejecting the hope of Israel's national revival in Palestine and the belief in the personal Messiah. Others still adhere to the idea of Israel's revival as an essential element of the Messianic idea. Others again, rejecting the belief in the appearance of a Messiah, claim the right of Israel's national existence. The great masses still believe in the many mystical notions connected with the Messianic hope, and expect many miracles and wonders to occur at the time of the Messiah's appearance. Whatever the teacher's own view may be, all these

opinions should be presented to the pupils with sympathy and respect. Thanks to the pliability of Jewish doctrine, all these divergent views are still regarded to be within the fold of Jewish belief and their manifestations in concrete movements and tendencies operate in our midst.

There were many persons who at one time or another presented themselves to the people as Messiahs and succeeded in obtaining adherents and followers. The result of these phenomena in Jewish history has always been disastrous.

The claim of Christianity that all Messianic prophecies were fulfilled in the advent of Jesus, is rejected by the Jews, because neither did the person of Jesus come up to the ideal of the Messiah, as conceived by the Jewish people, nor did he succeed in bringing about the great era of universal religion and universal peace, which was always an essential feature of the Messianic hope. Christianity and Mohammedanism, based as they are on Judaism, have helped in preparing the world for the acceptance of the pure monotheism and of an exalted standard of morality which Judaism teaches. They are stages in the development of the race toward the high ideals of the Messianic period when "the Lord shall be one and His name one."

QUESTIONS

1. Explain the doctrine of the election of Israel. How does this idea harmonize with the idea of God's love for all men?

2. What is the twofold aim of the election? Illustrate by the passage from Exodus.

3. What is meant by the idea of the "remnant," of which the prophets often speak? Has Israel always been loyal to his mission? How was his disloyalty punished, and why?

4. What is the Jewish Messianic hope? What position does Israel occupy in the picture of the future of the race?

5. Mention some of the beliefs that have become parts of the doctrine of the Messiah. Have they all enjoyed general acceptance?

6. Describe the different notions of the Messianic hope now prevalent among the Jewish people. State your own opinion and justify it.

7. What was the chief reason for the temporary success of some of the false Messiahs? Mention two examples.

8. What is the attitude of Judaism to the Christian belief in the Messiahship of Jesus?

APPENDIX

RELIGIOUS LIFE IN THE HOME

In Judaism, religion has been made coextensive with life. Every detail of the daily routine of life has become associated in the Jewish mind with some religious act or thought. The ideal of holiness and all that it implies (see p. 264) is brought near to the Jew every moment of his life. We pronounce blessings on rising in the morning and on going to sleep in the evening; on washing our hands; when partaking of the daily round of meals; when enjoying a sensation of taste or smell; even when indulging in spiritual or intellectual delights (see p. 163). We are reminded of certain religious injunctions on putting on our garments; on entering upon our daily occupations; in our dealings with relatives or with business associates. The most ordinary occupations of life have become connected with some religious custom and hallowed by some religious act. The Jew has thus always been conscious of the nearness of God and of His rule over all his actions, thoughts and feelings. Thus, a Jew would not express a wish or a hope without accompanying such an expression with the words "if God so wills it" (im yirzeh ha-Shem) or "with the help of God" (b'ezrat ha-Shem), words which have become, with some variations, an integral part of every dialect spoken by the Jews in the diaspora.

There are, however, certain periods in life which have become much more closely associated with religion than others. The incidents marking distinct epochs in the life of the individual, as birth, marriage and death, have gathered around them a whole series of religious observances and practices which have per-

sisted throughout the ages, in spite of the many changes that Jewish life has undergone. Some of these ceremonies have a mystical origin, others may even be traced directly to the superstitions that have flourished at a certain era, but most of them serve to invest the events with deep solemnity and beauty. They emphasize the great principle of the Jewish religion, that life is holy and that God is close to all human affairs. We shall therefore consider briefly in the following pages the religious ceremonies connected with these three important occasions in life.

BIRTH

The desire for children was always very strong among Jews. Beginning with the period of the patriarchs and continuing throughout Jewish history, even down to our own times, this desire appears to have filled the hearts of Jewish men and women. The birth of a child was therefore greeted with much rejoicing on the part of parents and relatives. In this rejoicing the community was often invited to join. In the case of the birth of a male child, the happiness of the parents manifested itself in many ways. A feast (Shalom Zachar—"Peace! a male!") is prepared for relatives and friends on the Friday night following the birth, and also on Saturday morning. In some households, both in the case of a male and a female child, copies of Psalm 20 are hung about the room occupied by mother and child, probably to stimulate visitors to offer a prayer for the protection and welfare of the mother and the newly-born infant. This Psalm was sometimes accompanied by a number of kabbalistic prayers and incantations, of a superstitious origin, which no longer have any meaning.

On the eighth day following the birth of a male

child, the rite of circumcision is performed (see p. 178). This also is made an occasion of festivity and rejoicing. Care is taken that at least ten adult males (Minyan) should be present at the ceremony, and the various honors in the services connected with the performance of the rite are distributed among the different members of the family or assigned to distinguished guests. The most coveted honor (Mizwah) is that of holding the child while the operation is being performed. The one thus honored is called Sandek (godfather). Next to the chair upon which he is seated, another chair is placed, known as the "Chair of Elijah." Elijah, the favorite hero of Jewish legend (comp. I Kings 19:10), is presumed to be present on such an occasion and to lend his religious enthusiasm to the sacredness of the ceremony, as well as to afford protection to the child. The person honored to bring the child into the room and hand it to the Sandek is known by the German term Gevatter or Gevatterin (corrupted in Yiddish into Kwatter).

After the child is brought into the room on a cushion and placed upon "the chair of Elijah," the assembled guests exclaim, "Blessed be he who comes in the name of the Lord!" The father of the child and the Mohel (who performs the operation) each pronounce an introductory prayer and the child is then placed in the lap of the Sandek. Both the father of the child and the Mohel then pronounce the appropriate blessing and the operation is performed. The Mohel then takes up a cup of wine and chants a prayer over it, in the course of which the child is named and the hope is expressed that the parents may derive much joy through him, and that he may grow up to be a loyal member of the Jewish community and faithful to the religion of Israel. "Even as he has entered into the covenant, so may he enter into the Law, the nuptial

canopy, and into good deeds." The Sandek drinks of the wine and a few drops are also put into the mouth of the infant. The cup with the remaining wine is sent in to the mother, who also partakes of it (see Singer, *Authorized Prayer Book,* pp. 304-307).

The ceremony is usually followed by a banquet and it is regarded highly meritorious to partake of such a feast (Seudat Mizwah). In the grace after this meal, a series of special prayers are added for the safety and happiness of the new-born child.

If the child is not in good health, the rite of circumcision is postponed until he is declared to be well by a physician. Every precaution must be taken to safeguard the health of the child. The Mohel should be one who is skilled in his work, acquainted with the laws, and strictly religious in his life. The operation is performed also on Sabbaths and holidays, when the eighth day coincides with a Sabbath or a holiday. A postponed operation, however, is performed only on a weekday. In earlier times, it was usual to perform the rite of circumcision in the synagogue, in the presence of the congregation.

The ceremony of "the redemption of the first-born" (Pidyon ha-Ben, see p. 179) is also accompanied by a feast, which partakes of a religious character.

Similar festivities were observed in Jewish homes on the occasion of the weaning of a child (comp. Genesis 21:8); when the child began the study of the Hebrew alphabet, and when he began the study of the Torah, Mishnah or Talmud. The training of the child in a knowledge of the Torah and in the worship of God was regarded not only as the most sacred duty of the parents, but also as their greatest delight. From earliest infancy, the child was taught to repeat certain blessings and prayers (see p. 163) and on reaching the age of six or seven he was taken to school, where

he was initiated into the study of Hebrew and the Bible. This initiation was, in the Middle Ages, accompanied by a series of elaborate festivities and ceremonies (see Ginzberg, *The Jewish Primary School*). Many of these ceremonies have survived to the present day, differing in their details in various lands, but all having the same aim, to make the child realize the importance of the new step in his life and to arouse in him love and reverence for study and knowledge.

While the celebration of birthday anniversaries is not distinctly Jewish in its origin (see Jewish Encyclopedia, under "Birthday"), the thirteenth birthday anniversary of the boy (Bar Mizwah) is marked by special ceremonies and festivities (see p. 176).

Less importance was, in former times, attached to the Hebrew education of girls. While the girls were trained in the practical duties of religion in the home, it was not considered necessary to give them as complete a course in the study of the Hebrew language and of the Bible and Talmud as that provided for boys. In more recent times, girls are frequently given a thorough Hebrew education and they are sent to the Hebrew schools together with the boys. With the progress of the position of woman in all walks of life, it is recognized that the Jewish girl should become more thoroughly conversant with the religious teachings and practices of her people, so that she may be able to exercise her added duties and responsibilities to the Jewish community in a more intelligent manner.

MARRIAGE

Although in Jewish Law marriage is primarily regarded as a civil agreement, many religious customs and observances, in the course of time, clustered about the ceremony and made it a distinctly religious act.

The later Hebrew term for the nuptial ceremony, Kiddushin (consecration), indicates the religious significance which it assumed in the Jewish mind. It has come to be considered as a covenant, a holy bond (Proverbs 2:17, comp. Malachi 2:14), consecrated by God's presence. The ceremony is usually performed by a Rabbi or minister of religion, and is often conducted in the synagogue or in the synagogue courtyard. While the religious exercises connected with the wedding ceremony differ in character in different lands, they all have the same purpose—to surround this important event with proper dignity and solemnity and to hallow it with the blessings of religion.

According to old Jewish practice, the betrothal (Erusin), which preceded the actual home-taking of the bride (Nisuin), was in itself a binding compact from which neither party could withdraw without a formal divorce being granted by the court. In later times, the betrothal ceremony was combined with the wedding ceremony, so that what is now known as the engagement is merely an agreement between the two parties, carrying no legal obligation. The engagement consists of certain conditions (Tenaim) entered into by the contracting parties or their parents as to the marriage settlement (dowry—Nedunya), the time set for the marriage and other details stipulated in a written document. This contract also contains a clause, which provides that in case either party desires to withdraw from the contract before marriage, that party must pay to the other party a fine (Kenas), usually amounting to about one-half of the sum of the dowry agreed upon. The agreement is usually concluded with a feast, which is known as Kenas-Mahl. It is customary to break a dish at this ceremony, as well as at the wedding ceremony, possibly to sober the minds of the assembled guests and to

warn them against excessive hilarity. Another reason for this custom is to remind the assembled guests of the destruction of Jerusalem and of the abject position of Israel in exile, in accordance with Psalm 137:5, 6. (See Jewish Encyclopedia, under "Betrothal," "Marriage Ceremonies.")

The wedding ceremony proper is celebrated under a canopy (Huppah), made up of four staves with a covering of silk or satin, often richly embroidered. This is symbolical of the home that the couple are about to build for themselves. First the bridegroom is led in under the Huppah, usually to the accompaniment of music, and then the bride is brought in. In some lands it is customary for the bride, the parents and the rest of the bridal party to make seven circuits around the bridegroom while the minister chants the introductory words of greeting. The first blessing (Birchat Erusin—Betrothal Blessing) is then pronounced by the officiating minister over a cup of wine, which is handed to the groom and the bride in turn to drink from. The groom then places a ring on the second finger of the right hand of the bride and pronounces the following words: "Behold, thou art consecrated unto me by this ring according to the Law of Moses and of Israel." This, when said in the presence of two witnesses, is the essential portion of the wedding compact, according to Jewish law. The use of the ring is of more recent origin; in early times a coin or any object of value was used. The ring should contain no jewels the value of which cannot readily be estimated.

The Ketubah (Marriage Contract) is then read aloud by the officiating minister. In this contract, the bridegroom makes a settlement upon his bride which will insure her against destitution in the case of his death or in the case of divorce. This is followed by

the chanting of the seven wedding blessings (Birchot Nisuin) over a cup of wine, from which again both the bride and the groom sip a portion. The seven wedding blessings (Sheba' Berachot) contain the blessing over the wine, praise of God as the Creator of the world, and of man and of woman, a prayer for the restoration of Zion, and a prayer for the happiness of the young couple. The ceremony is concluded with the breaking of a glass by the bridegroom, after which the assembled guests offer their good wishes (Mazzal Tob) to the married couple.

It is customary for the bridegroom and the bride to fast on the day of their wedding. While it is the most joyous day of their lives, it is also a day of serious reflection and solemn prayer. The bridegroom recites during the Minhah service the confession of sins (Viddui), taken from the services of the Day of Atonement. After the wedding ceremony it was customary for the couple to go to a separate room, where they were served a meal especially prepared for them. Later they joined the assembled guests at the wedding banquet, where the bridegroom delivered a learned discourse. Then the gifts were bestowed upon the couple by the relatives and the guests (Derashah Geshenk). The grace recited after the festive meal concludes with the seven blessings chanted under the canopy. The same blessings are, in some instances, repeated at other meals during the seven days of rejoicing or banqueting (Shib'at Yeme ha-Mishteh), following the wedding ceremony. Dancing and merrymaking usually accompany the wedding banquet (see Singer, *Authorized Prayer Book,* pp. 298-300, for the order of services).

In more recent times, anniversaries of the wedding day are celebrated, and some of them, especially those marking the twenty-fifth and fiftieth wedding anni-

versaries, are celebrated with appropriate religious ceremonies.

When first occupying a new house, a feast is prepared and some Psalms and hymns are chanted at the dedication (Hanukkat ha-Bayit; see Singer, *Authorized Prayer Book*, pp. 300-303).

DEATH

The general sentiment prevailing in all the ceremonies connected with death, burial and mourning is that of the hope of immortality. The belief in a future life is the sustaining element in the great grief coming to relatives and friends in the death of a dear one, and this belief is made prominent in the religious observances clustering around such an event. The Jew has been taught to view this life merely as a preparation for the more exalted, more ideal life in the future world. While the moment of departure is sad and painful, the anguish is alleviated by the consciousness that the departed is about to enjoy the blessings of a purely spiritual existence. The assurance of immortality is, however, beclouded by the apprehension lest the departed did not always fulfil his duties to God and to men and did not entirely regulate his life in agreement with the divine law. The feeling that one will be unable to partake fully of the blessings of the future world unless one's soul is pure from sin (see p. 256 ff.) is the cause of the sorrowful regrets that are uttered at the time of a death. The complete confidence in the goodness and mercy of God and the strong faith in a future spiritual existence indeed deprives death of many of its terrors, but the feeling of unworthiness and of failure to be fully prepared for that life brings to the Jew the desire to become reconciled with God by repentance and prayer

for forgiveness when he realizes that the end of his life is approaching.

It is for this reason that when the relatives or those present at the sick-bed notice that the moment of death is near and that there is but little hope for recovery, they urge the patient to confess his sins and to pray for God's pardon. There are special forms of confessions and prayer provided for such an occasion (see Singer, *Authorized Prayer Book,* p. 317). In order not to discourage the patient, the words addressed to him should conclude with the remark that many have recovered even after reciting the confession of sins, and that the act of confession itself might cause God's favor to turn towards him so that he might be restored to life and health. If the patient is no longer able to speak, others should recite the confession in his behalf. The prayer concludes with the declaration of faith, "Hear, O Israel, etc."

When life becomes extinct, those present say "Blessed art Thou . . . the true judge." The mourners tear the upper part of their garments, as a symbol of grief (see Genesis 37:34, et al.). In Oriental lands, interment is usually made on the day of death, but in colder climates the body is often kept two or three days before burial. In former times, every community had special societies (Hebrah Kadisha—"Holy Society"; Gemilut Hesed shel Emet—"Society for Performing Real Kindness"), whose function it was to attend to the dead and to prepare the body for burial. The preparation consisted in bathing the body (Taharah—Purification) and dressing it in shrouds (Tachrichin), specially prepared for the deceased. This is now usually entrusted to an expert undertaker, although in many cases, even now, the relatives and friends of the deceased prefer to attend to these matters themselves, as a last token of affection.

Symbolic of the belief in immortality, a light is kept burning in the house of mourning from the time of death to the end of the prescribed seven days of mourning (comp. Proverbs 20:27). Some keep the light kindled for thirty days, and others for the whole first year. On the recurring anniversaries of the date of death (Yahrzeit) a memorial light is kept burning the whole day.

It is regarded as a meritorious act to follow a funeral procession (Halvayyat ha-Met), some going as far as the burial-ground, others following only part of the way. At the cemetery, a prayer (Zidduk ha-Din) is recited by a minister. In this prayer the mourners are exhorted to resign themselves to the will of God, who can do no evil and whose work must be for the best.

The period of mourning begins from the time of burial. The first seven days (Shibah) are most rigorously observed. The mourners are seated on low stools, and without shoes, as a token of humility. They are exempt from exchanging the customary greetings with friends who may come to offer them their sympathy and condolence. It is, however, highly commendable for the people of the community to visit the mourners so as not to leave them alone to brood over their grief (comp. Ecclesiastes 7:2). During these seven days, the regular services are read in the house of mourning and the mourners recite the Kaddish (see p. 150). The mourners abstain during this period from all their ordinary occupations and keep their minds on the memory of the departed. In case of children mourning for a deceased parent, the period of mourning is extended to twelve months from the time of burial, while other relatives observe only the first thirty days (Sheloshim) as days of mourning. During this time, the mourners abstain from attending festive banquets,

unless connected with a religious ceremony; they do not visit places of amusement and avoid any kind of enjoyment, especially that derived from listening to music. Children mourning for a departed parent are expected to attend services regularly for eleven months so that they may be able to recite the Kaddish (see p. 150). The Kaddish is also recited by them on every recurring anniversary of the death of a parent.

It is customary to place a stone (Mazzebah) over the grave of the deceased, on which are engraved the name of the departed and the date of his death. In some cases lengthy poems, often in the form of acrostics, are inscribed on the stone, in which the virtues of the departed are set forth and the love borne for him by relatives and friends is described. The stone is usually erected after the expiration of the first year of mourning.

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